Evangelical Christendom.

JUNE, 1876.

THE MONTH.

THE difficulties of the Eastern question seem to increase rather than diminish; and the assassination of the Consuls of France and Germany at Salonica by Mussulmans is one of many facts which indicate the gravity of the crisis now impending. It is hard indeed, just now, to judge whether the Christian or the Mohammedan subjects of the Porte the most imperil its authority, and tend the most to bring about the downfall of its sway. Whilst the former assert persistently their determination no longer to submit to Turkish rule, and declare that their grievances are such as admit of no remedy but severance from Ottoman dominion, the latter violently oppose all concession to their claims, and regard even the reforms which the Government, at the instance of the European Powers, is prepared to sanction, as treason to the Moslem faith. The greatest excitement prevails not only in such outlying territories as Damascus and Beyrout, but even in the capital itself. And if under the very eye of the Government Moslem fanaticism can hardly be restrained, much more must the Christian inhabitants of distant provinces be exposed to violence and outrage. At Salonica it was deemed prudent to postpone the funeral of the murdered consuls until a strong body of troops could be collected to enforce order, and similar precautions in other districts have been found desirable. Meanwhile a difference of opinion has arisen amongst the Powers, whose diplomatic intervention between Turkey and her revolted subjects has hitherto been most effective. Not only has England decided to stand apart from the united action of the three great empires of Europe, but Austria has to some extent separated herself both from Germany and Russia, or rather, these two Powers are in favour of further concessions to the insurgents than were implied in Count Andrassy's note. Under these circumstances, the conferences at Berlin having terminated, another meeting of the signatory Powers is said to be in contemplation. A change of Ministry at Constantinople adds to the general uncertainty, and gives new occasion for distrust. It is, no doubt, prudent that in this state of things England should not commit herself to united action with the Continental States. The Sultan's Government is placed between two fires, either of which might at any time effect its absolute destruction. On the one hand, any determined refusal to accede to the propositions of Russia, Germany, and Austria, would probably bring about an armed intervention on the part of those Powers, and involve the Porte in a ruinous and fatal war; on the other, any bold and vigorous attempt honestly to carry out those propositions might as probably stir up the whole Moslem population to open and successful insurrection. We incline, therefore, to believe that our Government acts wisely in declining to identify itself with the course of policy pursued by other States, and especially with Russian purposes and aims. It is impossible now that we should repeat, as a nation, the policy of twenty years ago, and take up arms to defend the integrity of Turkey; it is equally impossible that we should knowingly subserve any schemes for Russian conquest or aggrandizement. Such action as this country may have to take will be regulated

(or should be) mainly by a regard to British interests alone. To further these effectively, that action must be independent; and whilst undoubtedly we should shrink from advising the Sultan to refuse the proposals or resist the intervention of the Powers, we decline to assume a position which might at any time compel us, against both our interests and our will, to take up arms for their enforcement.

The French Chambers have again assembled, and, after a stormy and somewhat vigorous debate, have, as was foreseen, rejected the proposal for an indiscriminating amnesty. The crimes of the Communistic leaders were, in many respects, too flagrant to be regarded merely as political offences, or as excesses which might be palliated, if not excused, by any provocations previously given, or any violence of political or party feeling. They were emphatically sins against society, and society now stigmatizes them as such, and marks its reprobation of their character. It was especially desirable that a verdict to this effect should be given under the present Government, and by the present French Assembly. Prior to the late elections, and under a somewhat reactionary Cabinet, there was no fear that undue indulgence would be shown to the Communists; rather was it to be apprehended that undue severity would be resorted to, that no discrimination would be exercised, and that the word itself would be employed as a bugbear to terrify weak minds, to uphold a rigorous and repressive policy, and to deter France from entering upon a course of rational and solid progress. Such apprehensions were warranted by actual facts; and now that another line of policy has been adopted, it was well that the leaders of the nation, desirous really to consolidate and develop the Republic and free institutions generally, should show practically that their aims and principles had no sympathy with those of the Commune. The large majority against the motion of M. Raspail has clearly manifested this; but, in accordance with the rational and moderate counsels now in the ascendant, the Government intimates that clemency will be shown towards the less prominent and culpable offenders. Two very significant debates have taken place in the General Committee of the Budget—the first relating to the question whether France should still be represented by an ambassador at the Papal Court; and the second, whether the Budget of Public Worship should be suppressed,—in other words, whether the Church should or should not remain connected with the State. Both these proposals were rejected, but the first mainly on the ground of being for the present "inopportune," and not imperatively called for. The second was rejected by a large majority; but in the discussion the Romish Church was spoken of as a focus of rebellion both against the State and society itself. Such debates show the tone and tendency of French sentiment in influential quarters. More than ever is it now needful that French statesmen, whose eyes are opened to the evils caused and perpetuated by the Church of Rome, should better understand the principles of scriptural Christianity; and it devolves on Evangelical Christians in France especially to maintain the great truth that the Gospel of Christ tends and is designed, not to degrade, but to elevate mankind—not to bring the people into bondage to a priesthood, but only to be servants to Him who truly, in all respects, makes His people free. Protestantism, in France, has thus a special mission to fulfil, and its struggles, on the one hand with the Romish clergy, and on the other with the Rationalists nominally within its own communion, have a special interest for Evangelical Christians, of whatever country or name. Rumours of mutual concession between the two opposing parties which now divide the Protestant Church established in France, have, of late, been somewhat rife, and projects by which both sides might be enabled, without open antagonism, to adjust their respective relations with the State, and to carry out its provisions for the common regulation of the

Church, have, of late, been freely spoken of; but we are glad to learn, from the most reliable and recent sources, that the Evangelicals are decided to concede nothing which would involve any sacrifice of their distinctive principles, or unduly abridge the freedom of their action in the time to come. They have an important position to maintain, and Christians in England will rejoice that they have the courage and resolution to maintain it.

The sudden death of M. Ricard, the late Minister of the Interior in France, will be regretted by all right-minded and honourable men, of whatever party in the State. Moderate in his views, yet sincerely attached to the Republic, he honestly strove so to carry out its principles as to make it work effectively in the interests both of order and of freedom. The appointment of M. de Marcère, a decided Liberal, as his successor, shows that the President is resolved to discharge the duties of his high office apart from all personal predilections, and within the lines which the Constitution has marked out. Marshal MacMahon thereby gains in popularity, and, amidst the strife of rival and conflicting parties, it is no small matter that the nation is delivered from any fear of *coups d'état*, and that men of opposing views alike repose confidence in the patriotism and the uprightness of the chief of the Executive.

The Ultramontane party are just now highly indignant at the project of law introduced by the Minister of Instruction for granting University degrees. By this project, the new Romish Colleges, so recently established, will be debarred from themselves exercising this power, which will be vested in a board of examiners appointed by the State. This is a heavy blow to the clericals, since it goes far to neutralize the advantages which the establishment of these Ultramontane universities was intended to secure. "Liberty of superior instruction," in the mouths of the clergy and their advocates, means simply liberty to indoctrinate the rising generation of the middle and upper classes with the special tenets of the Church of Rome. But the power of conferring degrees being taken from the ecclesiastics, as such, takes also from parents the chief motives to send their sons to colleges under exclusive priestly supervision. Hence the wrath of the Ultramontanes, and especially of the French prelates, who have deputed two Cardinal-Archbishops to convey to the Government the expression of their astonishment and grief. It is not, however, anticipated that these remonstrances will avail to change the purpose of the Ministry. The Government that passed the Education Bill was one devoted to the priesthood, but the statesmen now in power will do their best to neutralize its aims.

Once more another Constitution has been passed for Spain, and the article for religious toleration has received the sanction of the Cortes. Despite the opposition of the priests and the menaces uttered by the Vatican; notwithstanding, too, the disfavour with which this article is known to be regarded by the Royal Family itself, it has been carried in the Legislature by 226 votes against only 39! True, this concession to the spirit of the times goes no further than to give to non-Catholics the right of worship with closed doors; but when we recollect that the Government under which it has been carried is largely a reactionary one, it is clear that it is the general feeling of the people, truly represented in the Cortes, which, in the face of such determined opposition, has so triumphantly carried this enactment. No doubt, the principle thus recognized falls far short of what we mean by religious freedom; doubtless, also, it will not long suffice, even for the latitude of Spain. But, under present circumstances, it is all that could be hoped for. What the clergy wanted was absolute "religious unity"—in other words, that all Protestant communities, as such, should be broken up, and Protestants themselves expelled the land.

Now, however, for the first time, and instead of this, the Government of Spain recognizes the existence of non-Catholic communions, and acknowledges that, provided they do not "insult" the dominant religion, or too prominently obtrude their own upon the public eye, they have, at least, a right to that existence. The Vatican, indeed, is still unwilling to relinquish its grasp upon the realm of King Alphonso, and consultations are even now taking place at Rome amongst the Cardinals upon the course to be pursued. It is not wonderful that the Ultramontanes should be loth to give up a nation which has for ages been the strongest of all the strongholds of Papal tyranny and superstition. We apprehend, however, that the intrignes now being carried on with the view of repealing this new eleventh Article of the Spanish Constitution will most indubitably fail. Spain demands, and will receive, in the crisis through which she is now passing, the sympathies of all who prize as they ought the inestimable blessings of civil and religious freedom.

Parliamentary proceedings were last month somewhat wanting in their usual interest. The agitation on the subject of the Royal Titles Bill has subsided, and no measure of national moment occupies its place. There have, however, been discussions of an animated kind on questions not without importance in both Houses. In the Upper House, the speeches of the two archbishops on Earl Granville's resolutions on the law of burial evinced their own conviction that, on this matter, some concession must, ere long; be made, and the Duke of Richmond and Lord Salisbury, as representing the Government, did not dispute the view thus taken by the prelates. The Government defeat on Mr. Richard Smyth's resolution, affirming the expediency of prohibiting altogether the sale in Ireland of intoxicating liquors on the Sunday, must be attributed wholly to themselves. Public opinion in Ireland on this subject, is greatly in advance of that of England, and the nation, as a whole, is in favour of closing public houses for the whole of Sunday. If this be so, what valid reason can there be for refusing their request? The argument here against such an enactment —and the sole argument of any weight at all—is that it would be in opposition to the wishes of a numerous section of the people. But if the Irish nation demand the change, why should a measure, in itself so desirable, be opposed or thwarted by the Government? The fact is, that the Ministry would not consider the matter on its own intrinsic merits. They feared, that if once they sanctioned such a measure, the agitation on its behalf might extend to England, and an inconvenient precedent be established for a similar enactment here—a contingency which might compromise their position with the licensed victuallers. This decision on their part, is much to be regretted. We apprehend, however, that the Irish demand must, sooner or later, be conceded. Such a law is now in force for Scotland, where it works well; it is therefore, no new and untried experiment, and if demanded by the people, cannot, with reason, be opposed.

Our religious anniversaries have, this year, not been wanting either in their usual interest, or in tokens that the special aims and ends they represent are, year by year, increasingly appreciated by British Christians; gaining stronger hold upon their sympathies; and receiving from them a larger amount both of pecuniary support and practical co-operation. Trade and commerce have, of late, experienced a remarkable depression; yet, notwithstanding this, the income of most of the larger societies has notably increased. This is especially true of the Bible and the Missionary Societies, which stand in the forefront of the hosts of our aggressive Christianity, and which are girding themselves with new vigour for the conflict everywhere with ignorance and sin. The income of the Bible Society has been larger

than in any previous year of its existence, the total receipts amounting to £222,320, whilst the circulation of the Sacred Scriptures is constantly increasing, especially amongst the Roman Catholic populations of the Continent. No better proof of the society's usefulness could be given or desired. From India, too, there are cheering indications that the Word of God is receiving, amongst the educated Hindus, a larger measure of attention; that numbers, not professing Christianity, read it with constancy and care; and that sure, though silent, influences are at work which are gradually preparing our great Oriental Empire for the more general reception of the Gospel. On this point, the report of the Church Missionary Society gives valuable evidence, showing that the native pastorate has much increased, and that augmented zeal and activity in making known the truth mark the conduct of the native Christians. The income of this society has, during the year, reached nearly £200,000. Statistics, however, afford but imperfect data for judging of the actual progress of moral and spiritual enlightenment; and more practical evidence on this point is afforded by facts like that mentioned by Sir Bartle Frere, who affirmed that in districts where, forty years since, no white man would have dared to show himself, European missionaries of all denominations, without let or hindrance, were now earnestly and fully engaged in making known the truths of Christianity. Nor are the prospects which open up before our brethren of the London, the Wesleyan, and the Baptist Missionary Societies, one whit the less encouraging. It is, however, matter for regret that in many parts, especially of India, the missionaries find one of their greatest impediments to be the Romanizing doctrines taught by many of the English clergy.

Whilst the labours of those societies whose sphere of operations is in foreign lands have thus received no small share of public attention, it is satisfactory to find that this has not been in the least to the neglect of those numerous and important associations whose field of action is at home. The anniversaries of these societies have been largely and influentially attended, and ample testimony borne to the value of those evangelistic agencies with which our country is now permeated. Yet, after all, whether we regard the field of labour at home or abroad, after all that has been done, and is doing, we are constrained to assent to the truth of the statement that, whilst "the harvest truly is plenteous, the labourers are few." Much, undoubtedly, there is in every land, to arouse Christians to renewed and vigorous exertion. Opportunities for sowing good seed are abundant, and the enemy is busily engaged in sowing tares. Even in our land, men professing to be teachers of the Gospel, are, as the Earl of Shaftesbury affirmed, more especially in remote and secluded districts, exercising all their influence to bring back our simple peasantry to the doctrines and practices of Rome. It is in the union of British Christians in one compact phalanx—the hearty co-operation of all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, in resisting the assaults alike of superstition and of unbelief that, under God, the future hope and safety of this country lie. In this direction the Evangelical Alliance has ample scope and motive for exertion, and we direct the attention of our readers to its recent large and influential gathering, at the rooms of the National Club, on the 18th ult.

The Religious Tract Society and the Christian public have sustained a severe loss in the decease of Dr. George Henry Davis. As the indefatigable and highly-valued Secretary of that organization, and also as an influential and devoted member of the Council of the Evangelical Alliance, Dr. Davis had long occupied a prominent position in the sphere of Christian and evangelical activity, and his labours in that sphere were unwearied and assiduous, and marked alike by ability and zeal.

Devoted, discreet, and energetic, he possessed peculiar qualifications for the office which, for nearly twenty-one years, in connection with the Tract Society, he so honourably filled. To increase the usefulness of that society, to extend its operations in every department, all his efforts were directed. Nor was he less active in his sympathies with the cause of Christian union, which ever found in him a sagacious counsellor, and a warm and zealous advocate. Dr. Davis had been for some time in failing health, but his actual departure from this life was sudden. His loss, in many sections of the Christian Church, will be long and painfully felt.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

[From our own Correspondent.]

Paris, May 18, 1876.

PROTESTANT ANNIVERSARIES IN PARIS.

Remarkable reports and satisfactory situation,—such is the summary given by the journals of the series of May meetings just closed. They were more numerously attended than last year; but we long for the breath of the Spirit of God to animate this kind of meetings—for man to decrease, and Christ to be in all exalted. The closing meeting for the Lord's Supper was very good.

The *Bible Society of France* was the first to meet, presided over by M. Theodore Vernes. The receipts were 46,192fr.; expenditure, 41,462fr. It has eight colporteurs in Paris, and five in the environs; 27,501 copies of the Scriptures were put into circulation during last year. Its recent plan of presenting a pocket Testament to every young Protestant soldier is becoming more and more known and valued. Its revision of the Ostervald version is making progress; Geneva has purchased several thousands. Its Reference Bibles also are becoming more and more sought after.

The *Protestant Historical Society* has continued its useful researches and publications. It has produced a justificatory memoir on "Coligny's Widow;" the second edition of "Protestant France" has begun to appear; and its *Bulletin* continues to be published. The great work of M. Douen on the Protestant Psalter is also coming out, printed at the expense of Government. Had it funds sufficient, it would reprint some of the Protestant classics, Beza, Crespin, etc. It has received the legacy of Athanase Coquerel, the papers of Paul Rabaut, and 400 volumes of history.

The *Paris Tract Society* has printed five new tracts for adults, and two new tracts for children, during the year. It finds the difficulty great to obtain suitable manuscripts. It offered prizes for original tracts last year; forty-one manuscripts came in, but none were equal to what was hoped; one, however, received a prize, and others, after remodelling, will be printed. New editions of eighty-three old tracts have also been made. The *Almanach des bons Conseils* had one or two allusions to, or insinuations against, Romanism, and the Government refused the stamp; the pages objected to were removed, and the stamp was granted, but too late to secure the usual large sale; 117,000 were printed, nearly all are sold. The *Ami de la Jeunesse*, the society's illustrated journal, has 2,350 subscribers. The society has sold 7,000 of its books. The receipts have been 66,746fr., and the expenditure 66,685fr. It has found the experiment of associating its work with a bookseller as commercial agent injurious to both; and by common consent, at the expiration of the contract, the parties have separated. An improved administration and 5,000fr. from the London Religious Tract Society have helped to bring about a hopeful state of finance. The following week a deputation from the English Tract Society had a conference with about sixty pastors concerning the spread of truth in France by means of tracts. Several important points were agreed upon, and in a public meeting the English brethren sought to stir Christians up to make a much greater use of tracts. Many were greatly pleased, and a warm, grateful feeling has remained, besides the adoption of various suggestions.

The *Protestant Bible Society*.—The receipts of this society are 37,134fr., and the expenditure is 30,706fr. It distributed during the year 2,140 Bibles and 6,498 Testaments. The society is printing the version by Segond, but it needs 17,500fr. to complete it. During the year it has lost four vice-presidents; M. Montandon was named president. The special object of this society is to furnish an octavo

Bible to every couple married in the Protestant church, and a New Testament to every communicant for the first time.

The *Evangelical Society* expended 134,277fr., and could only make good 123,876fr., besides the last year's deficit, when a bequest from England of 25,000fr. came at the very last moment to relieve anxiety. The society has met with unusual difficulties—five agents ill at the same time, twelve stations shut up in a single arrondissement, six vacant places in the committee, etc. Dr. Fisch, who does not read the report, but tells it, gave an interesting sketch, and encouraging too, of the society's labours, which continue, he said, to consist in giving the Gospel to populations whom they hand over to the churches when a congregation is formed.

The *Protestant Sou Society* has collected in tiny sums 16,000fr., 14,000fr. of which were divided among various other societies to the number of thirty-six, to which a thirty-seventh is added this year—the Protestant Committee for the evangelization of the valleys where Felix Neff laboured, and the departments of the South-east.

The *Missionary Society* was very numerously attended, and presided over by M. Leon de Bussières, who showed the progress obtained in fifty years' time by the Bassutos; and at present little missionary expeditions go out from their midst. In Senegal a Mohammedan priest was baptized after conversion; it is said to be the first instance of the kind. So many children are now brought to the missionaries, that they cannot accept them all; men are wanted as missionaries. Interesting accounts were also given of Tahiti and Madagascar, as well as of Bassutoland. 204,694fr. have been received, and 214,206fr. expended. There is a deficit of 22,437fr. from previous adverse balances.

One of the societies in most urgent need of help just now is that of *Primary Instruction*, to open schools and in aid of those already founded. The fearfully small salaries given, in many instances, to schoolmasters and mistresses by Government is matter of public notoriety; this society comes in by its timely help to relieve cases of such necessity among Protestant schools. From its commencement, forty-six years ago, it has sent out 1,200 breveted teachers from its normal schools; through its means, 1,289 schools have become communal schools, and are supported by Government; and of these, 700 owe their existence to the society. The resources come from an annual bazaar in Paris, and subscriptions from the rest of France.

THE GENERAL PASTORAL CONFERENCES occupied four sittings, and discussed two questions: (1) the catechetical instruction of the young; and (2) the present state of the critical question on the fourth Gospel. Pastor Bersier introduced the subject of the instruction of catechumens by giving a rapid historical survey of the way in which the Church in all ages has sought to fulfil the duty, and concluded that catechizing should be the work of the Church, not an individual work. Pastor Recolin said that the catechism should have for aim, to teach the young, to draw them to Christ, and to prepare them for the Church. The characteristics of a good catechism are (1) to be biblical in spirit and in form; (2) historical and progressive, like the revealed will of God; (3) clearly to articulate the fundamental doctrines; (4) to set forth the faith of the Church, and consequently to be adopted and recognized by the constituted ecclesiastical authorities; (5) to be brief and clear. He believes this plan to be preferable to taking the Bible *only* as the basis of the teaching. A discussion then took place on the question, Should the catechumenat be an ecclesiastical institution or not? After the two above-named speakers, Professor Sabatier took the same view, and was met by Dr. de Pressensé, who energetically declared himself, as usual, for individual profession and individual instruction of those who will enter the Church after profession. The Decalogue was also a subject of discussion. Pastors Bianquis, G. Fisch, and Hollard said Christian morals could not be derived from it; it only has a preparatory importance. The Christian should give himself wholly, loving Christ because Christ first loved him. Pastors Appia and Monnier greatly approve of the use of the Decalogue; among other advantages, the Ten Commandments are a counterpoise to sickly mysticism, and the reading of them in the Church has often stopped a soul from giving way to temptation.

THE LUTHERAN CONFERENCES, which had not taken place for some years, were on the subject of "What is the Church?" Pastor Menegoz read a paper developing the three points: 1. The Church is a divine institution for the salvation of men; 2. The whole body of the elect; 3. A community grouping itself around Jesus Christ.

THE REFORMED CHURCH OF FRANCE.

The temptation has been placed in its subtlest form before the Reformed Church to undo all it has been doing, and cement union with the Rationalists. So obvious is it that the words of peace and union which

have been used are but synonymous with latitudinarian indifference—so plainly is the project seen to be a snare—that it is likely to be avoided; but the permanent Commission consented to an interview with the Rationalist delegates who had met in Paris; the latter, however, not being all in the capital, it could not take place.

GERMANY.

[From our own Correspondent.]

——, Prussia, May 17, 1876.

THE PRUSSIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION.

The Bill for legalizing the new Church Constitution in Prussia has now passed the House of Deputies. It was finally adopted by a majority of 211, against 141 votes. The debates were rather void of interest this time. Our Church had not one real advocate in the whole House. One Conservative member said that he thought many of the restrictions of the liberty of the Church unnecessary, but that he would vote for them so as not to endanger the fate of the whole Bill. Two Ultramontanes protested against these restrictions, as they wish liberty of action for themselves, but that is all.

German Liberalism is, alas, with very few exceptions, hostile to the Church; but the two great branches of the two great Liberal parties show it in a different way. The Progressionists wish liberty for every individual—they will even grant liberty to the orthodox individual, but they do not wish a Church to be able to exert any influence. The Progressionists, therefore, voted against the Bill. They see in a constituted Church a danger to liberty; they want every congregation to be sovereign. Professor Virchow particularly mentioned that it was quite unnecessary to build churches in Berlin; most of them had empty seats, with the exception of St. Matthew's church. We are glad that he gives this testimony to one where the Gospel is truly preached. In fact, all the churches in Berlin where God's Word is preached are very well attended. Only those in which the heroes of modern Liberalism declaim their own wisdom have the benches empty. But Mr. Virchow is mistaken. If there were more churches, the number of church-goers—which is very small in proportion to the whole population—would increase. How can the Church exert much influence in large parishes of nearly 80,000 souls? The National-Liberal party, on the contrary, wish a constituted Church; but they wish to have guarantees that their own views shall be always dominant. They therefore subject the Church as much as possible to the influence of the State.

The bill was passed in accordance with the recommendation of the committee. There hardly remains in it a shadow of liberty. The appointment of professors—which, in fact, is one of the utmost importance, as they teach the future pastors, and therefore have it to a great extent in their hands what views are to prevail in the Church—and the appointment of the high ecclesiastical officers, remain entirely with the State. The right to levy church taxes is limited to the very small sum of four per cent. of the income-tax. And no law may be promulgated relating to the Church, before the Cabinet has declared that it is not in opposition to the State. Is this the gratitude due to a Church whose members and pastors have always been loyal; to a Church to whom, as Professor Gneist said in the House, Prussia greatly owes her moral development?

EFFICIENCY OF THE CHURCH COUNCILS.

In its reply to the decisions of the District Synods, the Consistory of the Province of Brandenburg gives some general views on the present state of religion. We gather from it that the Church Councils have, on the whole, proved themselves to be useful. There are some pastors who see in them nothing but an encumbrance, and there are other people who expect too much from outward constitutions. But apart from these extremes, the general impression is that the Church Councils have done well, that they have assisted the clergyman in many things. The lay members have shown increased interest in their office, and directed their attention not only to the secular and financial part of the work, but also to the improvement of the Church and the service, and to the different moral wants of the congregations.

THE SUNDAY AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

The Congress for Home Missions held at Dresden last October, tried to give a new impulse to the movement for the observance of Lord's day. As the result of this, a Sunday Association has been formed in Berlin. A meeting was convened for the purpose on the 26th of last month. A number of friends joined the new association and gave in their adhesion to the following principles: "The members intend, first, themselves to keep and sanctify the Sunday in an evangelical spirit, according to the best of their conscience, and to see that it is equally done in their houses and families, by their servants and workmen. They further intend to take part, as far as it

is in their power in the efforts of the association to revive the recognition of the sanctity of the Lord's day; to remove the obstacles which prevent the obtaining of the Sunday rest by the people; to secure greater respect for those civil enactments which are designed to protect the Sunday, and to prevent the abuse of Sunday rest."

The society will have a great work to do; but the first meeting was only intended to facilitate an understanding as to the mode of action to be adopted. The meeting had a peculiar interest, arising from the circumstance that Mr. Hasselmann, one of the leaders of social democracy in Germany, made his appearance. He addressed the assembly, saying that it would be impossible for his party to co-operate directly with the new society, but that otherwise they gladly welcomed all allies in the work of regaining the free Sunday for the labouring classes. He said that several points had been already gained by his party; it was due to their influence that most of the German newspapers now only appeared six times instead of seven times a-week. He could only advise the new society to be clear and positive in their demands. He found its programme not distinct enough. They ought to demand that all work be forbidden by law on the Sunday. Mr. Oldenberg, Secretary of the Central Committee for Home Missions, replied, that indeed a direct co-operation with social democracy was impossible, but that they were thankful for Mr. Hasselmann coming in their midst. He hoped that Mr. Hasselmann would use his influence that the Socialist papers might not rob the people of every belief. Mr. Hasselmann answered that religion was not in the programme of his party, but was a private affair of each member. This may be that gentleman's view, but on the whole it is not true. The Socialist papers all bear a decidedly anti-religious stamp—they draw down ridicule upon everything which is religious. The Socialists, by principle, keep away from all the ordinances of the churches, and in this respect make an ample use of the new law on civil marriage. It would be but fair if they also, at least, abstained from taking part in church affairs, but at Wandsbeck, in Holstein, two of their party have been elected on the church council. What can they wish to do there, if not to make the church worldly? But it is an involuntary testimony they must give to the Word of God, when they claim for themselves a free Sunday, and in this respect we may be satisfied with their endeavours, though we certainly do not approve of the use they make of a free Sunday, and though we hold co-operation to be impossible.

CHINA.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, while some labourers were digging for the foundations of a house near an ancient capital of China, situated nearly 800 miles south-west of Pekin, the present capital, they came upon a marble block or slab, about ten feet long, four feet wide, and eleven inches thick. Its top was curved and carved so as to represent the twistings and convolutions of a dragon, the sacred animal of the "Flowery Land." One side and the two edges were covered with inscriptions in Chinese and Syriac characters. And what do you suppose was written there? Nothing less than clear and emphatic testimony to a religion far purer and older than the system of dark superstitions and idolatries so long accepted and cherished by the swarming millions of China; nothing less than indubitable proof that right in their midst the Lord Jesus once had many followers.

Those inscriptions have been translated recently by Dr. Bridgman, and those interested can read them in full by looking into that best of all books on China, Williams's "Middle Kingdom" (vol. ii., pp. 291-7). Here are a few extracts:—

"In the reign of the civil Emperor Taitsung, there was in Judea a man of superior virtue, called Olopun, who, guided by the azure clouds, bearing the Scriptures, and observing the laws of the winds, made his way through dangers and difficulties. In the year A.D. 636, he arrived at Changngwan. The Emperor instructed one of his ministers to take the imperial sceptre, and go to the western suburbs, receive the guest, and conduct him into the palace. The Scriptures were translated in the library of the palace. The Emperor, in his private apartments, made inquiry regarding the religion, and fully satisfied that it was correct and true, he gave special commands for its promulgation. The document bearing date August, A.D. 639, runs thus:—

"'Religion is without an invariable name. Saints are without any permanent body. In whatever region they are, they give instruc-

tion, and privately succour the living multitudes. Olopun, a man of great virtue, belonging to the kingdom of Judea, bringing the Scriptures and images from afar, has come and presented them at our capital. On examining the meaning of his instruction, it is found to be pure, mysterious, and separate from the world. On observing its origin, it is seen to have been instituted as that which is essential to mankind. Its language is simple, its reasonings are attractive, and to the human race it is beneficial. As is right, let it be promulgated through the empire. Let the appropriate board build a Judean church in the righteous and holy street of the capital, and appoint thereto twenty-one priests.'

"Now verily, the unchangeably true and recondite, the Eternal Cause of causes, the far-seeing and purely spiritual, the never-ending and incomprehensible Being, who, grasping the poles created the universe, and being more excellent than the holy ones, is supremely honourable. This is our mysterious Trinity—the true Eternal Lord Jehovah. He moved the primeval spirit and produced all things visible and invisible. The dark expanse was changed, and heaven and earth were unfolded. The sun and moon revolved, and day and night began. As an Architect, having finished the universe, He created the first man, endowed him with goodness and benignity; and commanded him to rule the world. His original nature was pure and unsullied, and his simple and uncorrupted heart was wholly free from inordinate desires. But at length Satan, by exercising dissimulation, and by throwing a gilded covering over that pure and uncorrupted nature, took away equity and greatness from the centre of good, and insinuated evil and darkness in their stead.

"Thereupon our Trinity set apart the illustrious and adorable Messiah, who, laying aside His true dignity, came into the world as a man. Angels proclaimed the joyful tidings. A virgin gave birth to the Holy Child in Judea. A bright star proclaimed the happy event. Persians, seeing its brightness, came with presents. He fulfilled the ancient laws given by the twenty-four holy ones [writers of the books of the Old Testament]. He ruled families and nations with great virtue. He purged away the dross and perfected the truth.

"His mighty work thus finished at midday, He ascended to His true estate. Twenty-seven books remained. He set forth original conversion for the soul's deliverance, and He instituted the baptism of water and of the Spirit, to wash away the vanity of life, and to cleanse and purify the heart.

"The true and constant doctrine is mysterious, and difficult to be characterized. Anxious to make it clear and manifest, we can only name it the ILLUSTRIOUS INSTRUCTION."

The sum of the information contained on this tablet is that early in the seventh century Nestorian missionaries introduced the Gospel into China, and that Christianity became somewhat widely prevalent. Ecclesiastical history shows that this is probable. Mosheim says: "We may believe that at an early period the Christian religion extended to the Chinese, Seres, and Tartars. There are various arguments collected from learned men to show that the Christian faith was carried to China, if not by the Apostle Thomas, by the first teachers of Christianity."

This tablet is not far from eleven hundred years old. When unearthed, it was again erected, by command of the then reigning Emperor, within the enclosure of a Buddhist temple. There it now stands, a dumb memorial of the truth and power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, where there are no believers in that Gospel within hundreds of miles, and where, among the thousands and tens of thousands of people, there is no knowledge that their ancestors ever heard of Jesus Christ. The Rev. Chester Holcombe, missionary of the American Board in China, while making, a few months ago, a long missionary tour, after much searching, found the tablet. With many other things about it, he writes as follows: "You can, with difficulty, imagine our feelings of joy and gratitude to God in permitting us to stand before this silent witness to His truth among this great nation, now gone after idols. The spot seemed almost sacred. Perhaps it would have seemed quite so but for the presence at my elbow of the sneering Buddhist priest who had charge of the enclosure in which the tablet stands. As it was, I wanted to kneel down and thank God for letting me see the table of stone, and to press my lips to it."

He took pains to procure an exact copy of it, made after the Chinese style of lithographing, which he has just sent to the church in Winchester, which has the pleasure and honour of contributing the funds for his support. Among the many reflections excited in the mind by these interesting facts, let these two be remembered—viz., that Christianity once went further into "the world" than we are accustomed to think; and that, with apostolic and primitive faith and zeal, it will recover and hold its lost ground.—*Boston Congregationalist.*

Home Intelligence.

THE MAY MEETINGS.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Exeter Hall was well filled by the supporters of the Bible Society on occasion of its seventy-second anniversary. The Earl of Shaftesbury, President of the society, filled the chair, as he has done at its annual meetings for upwards of twenty years. The Rev. Charles Jackson read the report. It stated that at the beginning of the present century it was probable that there were not more than four or five millions of copies of the sacred volume in the world, existing in about fifty different translations. Since the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society upwards of 76,000,000 of copies, in whole or in part, had been circulated from its depôts, while other kindred societies which had sprung out of it, and had been aided by it, have distributed above 55,000,000 of copies more; so that during the present century about 131,000,000 copies of the sacred Scriptures, in whole or in part, had been put into circulation by Bible societies alone in various parts of the world. The number of languages and dialects in which the Bible was translated had been raised from 50 to upwards of 200, while the number of versions of the Scriptures, in whole or in part, hitherto prepared (there being sometimes more than one version in the same language) was about 260, the preparation of which had been promoted, directly or indirectly, by the British and Foreign Bible Society. In above thirty instances languages had been for the first time reduced to a written form, in order to give the people speaking them the Word of God. In addition to a circulation of English Scriptures to the extent of about 38,000,000 of copies in Great Britain, Ireland, and the colonies, the society was prosecuting its work in all the countries of Europe, as well as among the principal Asiatic and African nations, in Madagascar, in the chief islands of the South Pacific, in South America, Mexico, Labrador, and Greenland; and it was ever ready to furnish Christian missionaries with copies of the Scriptures in the languages of the nations among whom they laboured. During the past year the society has steadily and successfully followed up its work. In France the circulation of the Scriptures had risen 15 per cent., in Poland 34 per cent., and in Italy as much as 136 per cent. Bishop Reinkens had been liberally supplied with Bibles, of which he had made good use. The receipts from ordinary sources for the year ending March 31, 1876, amounted to the sum of £222,212 7s. 3d., including £116,802 5s., applicable to the general purposes of the society, and £105,410 2s. 3d., receipts for Bibles and Testaments. Adding £108 1s. 8d. dividends on stock invested on account of Lieut.-Col. Roxburgh's Fund for Colportage in India, the total net receipts amounted to £222,320 8s. 11d. The total net payments of the year amounted to £211,251 16s. 5d. The issues of the society for the year are as follows: From the depôt at home, 1,528,867; from depôts abroad, 1,153,318: in all, 2,682, 185 copies of Bibles, Testaments, and portions. The total issues of the society now amount to 76,432,723 copies.

The Earl of Aberdeen, in moving the adoption of the report, expressed his cordial sympathy with the objects of the society, commended its constitution as eminently catholic and liberal, and expressed an earnest hope that the circulation of the Word of God, pure and simple, would continue to increase. The Very Rev. Dean Close contrasted the present state of the society with what it was when he became a collector for the society, sixty-four years ago. The progress not only of that, but of kindred societies, had been most wonderful, and that in itself, in his judgment, constituted a sure proof that God was with them. There never had been in the history of the world anything like the history of that society. It had been most marvellous, for although infidelity and rationalism, and superstition and Romanism, had all continued to oppose it, had all come in like a flood, it had been the standard of the Lord which had successfully opposed them. When he first became connected with the society the Bible was known in only a few lands, but since then it had been translated into every known and to some unknown tongues, until now, if they would place a red dot on the map of the world in every place where they had an agent, or where the Bible was to be had, it would shine like the stars in the firmament. The Rev. Dr. Thompson, of New York, spoke as a representative of the American Bible Society, and referring to the corruptions and upheavings in the social condition of America, expressed his deep conviction that there was a moral power

rising which would make itself felt before long, and that the grand truths of the old Bible and their common Christianity would govern that great people. One passage in Dr. Thompson's speech deserves to be quoted at length. Adverting to the cry raised in England and Germany of "Book worship!" and answering the objection that lovers of the Bible are "neglecting reason, and nature, and conscience, and intuition, and are really no better off than the African with his fetish, or the Papist with his superstitions and idolatries," Dr. Thompson yet contended that the Bible should be proclaimed as the voice that breaks the silence between heaven and earth, and urged those whom he addressed to go forward in distributing the Book. He added: "Book worship! What is this book worship that our critics sneer at? Is a truth any the less a truth that it is written and handed down in a book? Suppose Sir Charles Lyell has discovered and settled for us the gradual process of the earth's formation—suppose Darwin has discovered for us the solution of the origin of species; will that be any the less true that they have written it in a book? What would not any one of those philosophers give for the assurance that his book would be read a thousand years hence; that there would be worshippers in those far-off generations who would name them side by side with Bacon and Aristotle? It is not the homage to a book that they are afraid of. Take another view of it, and suppose the German exploring expedition now at work in Greece should stumble upon a manuscript that could be authenticated as the oldest manuscript of Plato; or suppose in some as yet unvisited tomb of Egypt we should come at last upon the lost books of Manetho; how great would be the competition between London, Paris, Berlin, and New York to get possession of that book; and when once they had it, they would set it up in a museum, cover it with glass, lock and double lock with padlocks, chain it, and leave it for the long line of scholars and antiquaries who shall come up year after year, and generation after generation, to pay their homage to the book! It is not the thing that they complain of—it is *this* Book, and what is in it. And wherefore? Because we are pleased to recognize in this Book an authority. Very well, if man is to have character, he must recognize authority somewhere. His conscience is but the interpreter and the executor to him of law; it is not the maker of law. His conscience respects something, his intuitions recognize something. Call it the laws of nature, if you please; call it the voice of history; call it the general consent of mankind; call it abstract truth—the principles of ethics—no matter what; call it, as we do, a living and personal God—a Power somewhere that can say, 'Thou shalt and thou shalt not:' until man recognizes that, there is no possibility of a sterling character. Well, but they offer us a substitute: our intuitions, our moral reason,—all admirable, beautiful in their way. One of the ablest expounders of these doctrines says that faith must look for its moral law to the intuitions of a soul, not to the authority of a book. These intuitions will teach us—what? The brotherhood of mankind, the love of the weak and the lowly, even though they be unlovely, and will pour the spirit of love into duty. Noble, beautiful sentiments! only they were spoken 1,800 years ago, and put in the Book; and because they were recorded in that Book, and that Book has lived through these ages, there is to-day a Christian civilization, the light of which, poured into these consciences, quickens their intuitions; and they think they have made some new discovery for the future of mankind, when they are only reflecting an old one. Why is it that I honour this Book? It is because I find it speaks to my intuitions, speaks to my conscience, speaks to my reason, speaks to my whole nature, and lifts me up above from the planes of this life to where I know I shall live and live for ever. If veneration be worship, then I do worship this Book; if gratitude for all that I am and hope to be be worship, then I do worship this Book; if loyalty to live for it, and I hope, so help me, God, if need be, to die for it, be worship, I acknowledge and confess I do worship this Book; but only in such sense as this, that it meets me as a man where I most need to be met." The Rev. Daniel Wilson said that like his friend, Dean Close, he had been a collector for the society when young: that was sixty years ago. He referred to his recollections of some of the founders of the society, and expressed his unabated attachment to its principles and its work. Mr. W. Pease, M.P., spoke of the obligations of Christians to disseminate the Scriptures among the nations of the earth. The Rev. Dr. James, of the Wesleyan Conference, adverted to the value of the society's work in anticipating the assaults of error—Popery, for instance—in many parts of the missionary field. Thanks were voted to the Chairman, on the motion of Signor Turin, Vaudois Minister of Milan, and the Bishop of Glou-

cester and Bristol; and Lord Shaftesbury, in rising to return thanks, was received with loud cheers, and in a brief but telling speech closed the meeting. His lordship stated that, having presided at no fewer than twenty-four anniversaries, he had not deemed it needful to intrude his sentiments as to the importance of the Bible Society, with which they were so well acquainted. But his lordship read a letter from Sir Bartle Frere, bearing testimony of immense value to the silent but progressive work going on amidst the millions who are our fellow-subjects in India. Sir Bartle Frere's letter reports how the Bible Society's work is extending and bearing fruit. Sir Bartle mentioned it as a striking fact, which impressed him forcibly on re-visiting India after an absence of eleven years, that he had been assured from many quarters that "many thousands of Hindus who do not make any profession of Christianity habitually use books of the Old and New Testaments as their models in prayer, and their standards of morality." Lord Shaftesbury called on the meeting to thank God that Sir Bartle Frere had been enabled to return home in sufficient time to send to us this solemn and striking testimony, for the increase of our confidence and encouragement in the work of circulating God's Holy Word. His lordship stated that although not quite so old as his excellent friend the Dean of Carlisle, this too might be his last appearance at such an anniversary; but, at all events, he could say that in a sublunary aspect the ambition of his life had been fully gratified in having for so many years filled such an important post as that of President of a society for diffusing the Word of salvation in all its purity to the uttermost ends of the earth. His lordship sat down amidst loud and protracted cheering.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Exeter Hall was already well filled with the friends of the Church Missionary Society an hour or so before the time fixed for its President, the Earl of Chichester, to take the chair at its seventy-seventh anniversary. The Rev. Henry Wright presented the report. The financial review of the year showed the gross receipts to be £195,116 8s. 1d. The gross expenditure amounted to £198,033 19s. After remarks on changes in the *personnel* of the society during the year, the foreign stations of the society were passed in review, beginning with Sierra Leone, the converts of which were already addressing themselves to the evangelization of the surrounding heathen tribes. Yoruba came next, where the Bishop has recently taken some important steps for the organization of the native Church. From the Niger mission, it was reported that King Okiya had again become friendly towards the mission. Chief Spiff had been baptized, and had become a communicant. At Bonny the native converts are 110; the King is friendly, but the chiefs are as madly hostile to Christianity as ever, and the death of the protomartyr of the Bonny Church, Joshua Hart, for refusing to eat things offered to idols, is described. At Lokoja, further up the Niger, the Gospel makes way among the heathen in spite of bitter Mohammedan opposition. In East Africa the mission among the slaves liberated by Her Majesty's ships London and Thetis in September last, is flourishing. The settlement has been named Frere Town, in commemoration of Sir Bartle Frere's services in the suppression of the slave-trade. The report then speaks of the Nyanza mission, in which so much interest is taken by the public, as was shown by the cheers with which the statements on this subject were received. The mission party will consist of the ordained clergyman, one Navy lieutenant, one civil engineer and architect, one mechanical engineer, one medical man, one agriculturist, one blacksmith, one industrial teacher, and one shipwright. Four have already started, and the other four would leave at the close of May. The accounts from the Mediterranean mission were then given. The society will still hold to its footing at Constantinople, but has resolved besides to push on into Palestine, and has appointed agents for Jaffa and Jerusalem. It has also been determined to make fresh attempts in Persia, especially among the Armenians at Ispahan, thus recovering the ground hallowed by the memory of Henry Martyn. India and Ceylon, Mauritius, China, Japan, New Zealand, North-west America, and the North Pacific were included in the survey, and the operations in all these vast and varied mission fields were stated to present more or less hopeful features. The following shows the latest statistics of the missions: Stations, 170. Clergymen: European, 211; native and country-born, 181; total clergymen, 392. European laymen: Schoolmasters, lay agents, etc., 38; European female teachers (exclusive of missionaries' wives), 11; native and country-born Christian catechists and teachers of all classes, not sent from home, 2,411; communicants, 24,540. After some remarks by the Earl of Chichester, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, in moving the adoption of the report, said they must all feel

pleasure in taking part in so good a work. His own pleasure, however, was not unmingled with regret at having to speak in public with so weak a voice, especially as he had to plead that afternoon for the British and Foreign Bible Society at St. Paul's Cathedral. These were days in which they heard strange things as to the missionary enterprise and missionary qualifications. There were two very serious heresies, as he would there venture to call them, upon the subject. One was the doctrine that men must be civilized first and Christianized afterwards. How often was this heresy held, sometimes innocently enough, but at other times, he feared, not altogether without guile! What! Was Christ our King to wait until science and philosophy had recovered men from barbarism before they were to be called upon to believe in Him, and to submit themselves to His beneficent sway? Such a maxim they must distinctly and emphatically repudiate. Let the work of evangelization and of general culture go on together, but Christianity was not to wait for the halting steps of civilization. The other heresy against which they must protest with all their might was the habit of speaking of Christianity as one religion among many others, with which it was put in competition and rivalry. Had they not had courses of learned lectures in time-honoured places, which thus compared together the religions of the world, Christianity among the rest? Our missionaries had been urged to study the religion of the heathen among whom they lived, and to present the claims of the Gospel to their hearers comparatively. It might be admitted that it is useful to study the religions of the old cultivated nations. He had himself read with profit the marvellous ethics of some of the Buddhist writers, and the hymns in the Zendavesta; but he strongly deprecated the view that our own sublime religion was in any degree of comparison with even the best of the other beliefs of mankind, ancient or modern. Our religion was one and alone—it was the religion of redemption. That was the message our missionaries had to preach. His lordship referred with satisfaction to the conference lately held under the society's auspices on the propagation of Christianity among the Mohammedans. How strange it was that such a religion as Mohammed's held such wide sway, and was even, as in Western Africa, seeming to spread! He thought they must agree with Sir Bartle Frere, in his valuable little work on East Africa, that Mohammedanism does tend to civilize men to some extent, and to raise them in the social scale. This seemed to afford some explanation of what at first sight was so strange. Another fact on which they might congratulate the society was the great and growing increase in the number of native missionaries. The Holy Ghost was speaking to the idolators through the lips of their own people. The native churches, moreover, were becoming self-supporting; nay, they were sending out missionaries to enlighten their own dark brethren. Everything encouraged them to press forward to the great future before them, whether they looked to barbarous Africa or to civilized India. As to the latter, he would cite a letter, which appeared about a fortnight ago in the *Times*, from the able pen of Professor Monier Williams, shortly after his return from India. The passage was as follows: "The ancient fortress of Hinduism is in this way being gradually undermined. The educated classes look with contempt on idolatry. In fact, the present condition of India seems very similar to that of the Roman empire before the coming of Christ. A complete disintegration of ancient faiths is in progress in the upper strata of society." The resolution was seconded by the Rev. John Barton, missionary from Madras, who entered at some length into details showing the spirituality and devotedness of the native Christians of Southern India. The second resolution, one in favour of the formation of a native pastorate, was moved by Viscount Midleton, who argued for such a ministry on the ground of climate, language, and the utter impossibility of securing a sufficiency of European clergymen. This resolution was seconded by Archdeacon Cowley, from Rupert's Land, who described the change for the better which had come over the country since he had resided there. Thirty years ago he planted himself out there among the devil worshippers, and had preached under the most discouraging circumstances. There were few agents of that society in North-west America, but, nevertheless, God had greatly blessed them. The third resolution was moved by the Rev. D. Brodie, from the Derajat, who pleaded the claims of a population of a million, amongst whom there was but one missionary. The resolution was seconded by the Rev. Canon Hoare, of Tunbridge Wells, who referred to their report as a fair specimen of what had been done by "the late Evangelical body," and claimed for the society increased pecuniary support.

The evening meeting of the society, which was presided over by Mr. Joseph Hoare,

was even more largely attended than in previous years, the special feature being the large number of young people present. The speeches were interesting, and were warmly applauded by the large audience.

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of this society was held at Exeter Hall, under the presidency of Mr. A. M'Arthur, M.P. There was a crowded attendance. In opening the proceedings, the Chairman said he had visited many parts of the world, and could bear testimony to the progress of missions and the benefits they conferred in advancing civilization, commerce, and learning. There could be no doubt that missionaries were the pioneers of traders. The venerable Dr. Moffat, whom he was glad to see present, when attending as a member of a deputation to Lord Carnarvon against the cession of the Gambia to France, gave a remarkable instance of this in the case of one station at which he had laboured. When he arrived there not £1 worth of English goods were sold, whereas now English manufactures were imported to the value of hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling annually. Geographical knowledge, literature, science, and art owed much to Christian missionaries.

The report, read by the Rev. Dr. Punshon, showed an income of £159,106, and an outlay of £151,211. Among the donations received during the year was one of £200 from the King of Holland, on behalf of the St. Eustatius and St. Martin's missions, in the West Indies. Full details were given of the work of the society on the Continent, in India, China, the West Indies, and Africa, showing that satisfactory results had been achieved. On the West Coast of Africa, especially, the work was full of promise. Education was as far as possible made everywhere to go hand in hand with religion.

The Rev. Gervase Smith, President of the Wesleyan Conference, in moving the adoption of the report, remarked that in an important State document issued twice a-year Her Majesty was made to say that her relations with foreign Powers were satisfactory. He could not say the same with respect to the Wesleyans. Their relations, for instance, with the great powers of Owston Ferry were not satisfactory, but were improving. The Wesleyans, however, had gained a victory, but had also to pay the cost. Their relations with those who wished to arrogate to themselves the title of "Reverend" were also disturbed, but were undergoing a process of improvement. So far as the epithet itself was concerned, it never troubled him at all. He never would spend a single moment in trying to show a gentleman that he ought to be courteous. He would not, therefore, utter a word of complaint on this subject; but if, by seeking to take the title of "Reverend" from him, it was meant to imply that he was not a minister of the New Testament, he would at once put down his foot and resent the calumny. After alluding to the kindness of the Duke of Bedford in respect to a chapel on his property, the President thanked Dean Stanley for his generous action with respect to the erection of a memorial of John Wesley in Westminster Abbey, adding, however, that the act did not imply that the Wesleyans agreed with all the Dean's ecclesiastical and theological opinions, or that the Dean was going to become a member of the Wesleyan Conference. He knew nothing of the high political or imperial considerations which sent the Prince of Wales to India, but many prayers had been offered that the visit might prove a blessing not only to his Royal Highness, but to the natives of that vast empire. He was happy to report a result already which was not expected. A good work had been going on among the marines and sailors of the Serapis and the Osborne, forty or fifty of whom had, during the royal visit, been converted to God. Mr. Smith concluded as follows: "I am thankful to congratulate our friends on the increased facilities which the Providence of God has given to us with regard to our missionary work. We are in a better position than our fathers to carry on our mission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. There are facilities afforded now in travelling that our fathers never had. We have put before us our duty, and we have put before us our prospects, which are very cheering. I rejoice to hear what is going on as to the acquisition of languages, and the circulation of the Scriptures from the press, and with reference to printing. Four centuries ago a Hollander was trying to carve the shape of a letter on the bark of a tree, and having succeeded, it occurred to him he might impress it on a piece of paper as well as on bark, and the result is that one out of the many Bible Societies the world has in it to-day can daily produce 1,000 copies of God's Holy Word. Though Voltaire boasted that he could with one hand pull down Christianity, which the twelve apostles had built up with both hands, the very press which Voltaire used is now being used by the Bible Society in printing Bibles and Testaments. We must continue

to preach the never-failing, never-dying, everlasting Gospel of salvation to man."

The Rev. James Fleming, Vicar of St. Michael's, Chester Square, in seconding the resolution, said: "I am happy to be among you to-day at the invitation of my friend Dr. Punshon; and I am truly glad, as a clergyman of the Church of England, which claims the good Dean Stanley, to stand on a Wesleyan platform this morning, if it were only to say that there are some of us who can do honour to the character and name of Wesley, and who can recognize your Church, its ministers, and its Christian institutions, and, as this vast assembly shows, its missionary spirit. I stand on this platform, though a unit, reminded that there is underlying all our differences of Church government, and all our conflicts of human opinion, a common brotherhood of Christians, and a communion of saints all agreed in one thing—doing good and maintaining our unfettered freedom of thought, our Christian liberality, and our full independence of action, and yet presenting to the world a picture of Christian union "distinct as the billows, but one as the sea." Whatever be her faults and her flaws, I love my own dear old Church of England, and I would give little for the man who does not love that Church which he conscientiously believes to be the best; but I have learned to love Christ better than any Church, and the truth of God better than any sect; and I am reminded this morning that while many may assume titles and badges and wear vestments, like the phylactery of the Pharisees of old, Christ gave no such distinctive mark or badge to His Church, except a robe to the heart as simple as it is beautiful, as sublime as it is original—a love that wells forth all that is good and great and noble in the world: 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.' I know that, as our Chairman observed, there are many persons in this somewhat hard and very practical age who think that we have not accomplished, for the continuous efforts and expenditure that have been made, nearly enough; but they could not have been persons who have understood the nature of the work, nor have they ever really, like men of commerce or business, sat down, as our Saviour said, 'and counted the cost.' Do they think, in such an undertaking as this, that a few score of years, and two or three generations of men, and some few hundreds of thousands of pounds, will suffice to demolish the strongholds of Satan that have been built in this world for nigh six thousand years? No; I do not think Christians take any such view of mission work. It is always a slow work. It is the greatest work that human hands have ever undertaken in dependence upon the divine help. Everything that is good and great in this world I think is slow:

'Slowly moves the march of ages,
Slowly grows the forest king,
Slowly all perfection cometh,
Every great and glorious thing.'

There may be, no doubt, in missions, as in everything else, ebbs and flows; there may be backward steps in this and in every good work, as well as forward; but it is like the tide itself. Yonder you see a wave coming on with a snowy crest, but though it comes faster and faster, it never reaches your feet, and it never touches the strand; but you notice this, as you watch upon the sea-shore, that while each billow follows the last and only breaks its crested head, yet though it may break and be flung back, and though it may be lost in spray as it seems, yet each wave breaks a little in advance of the one that went before it, until at last the whole tide not only laves your feet, but, like King Canute and his courtiers, you have to fly before the irresistible tide, till at length it floats every boat in every creek, and every ship in every harbour—the grand old sea possesses all the shore. So He that stilleth the water-floods holds every tide and every wind in the hollow of His hand, and we may be sure He is going forth every day like this same tide, conquering and to conquer."

The Rev. William Burgess, from India, spoke of the progress of the Gospel in that country. The meeting was also addressed by Mr. W. H. Stephenson, Mayor of Newcastle; the Rev. Dr. Mullens; Mr. J. H. Eaton, from Kandy, Ceylon; the Rev. W. H. Holland, of Leeds; and the Rev. J. Kilner.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The eighty-second annual meeting of this society was held at Exeter Hall; Mr. Henry Lee (of Manchester) in the chair. There was the usual crowded attendance, and the proceedings were animated throughout. The chairman spoke of the work which had been done by the society, and of its want at the the present time of a large accession of missionaries. The Rev. Dr. Mullens read the report, which stated that the income received during the year was 114,853*l*. In the review of the mission fields India came first, and great prominence was given to the visit of the Prince of Wales and its probable bearings on the ultimate Christianization of that country. "The feudal days, when the chief was every-

thing, when hill forts made each petty ruler independent of every other, when the low-born and the weak toiled for the strong, are passed away for ever. The reign of law—firm, even-handed—sustains the rights of man as man, and lifts the peasant from the dust to a level with the prince." Side by side with the preaching of the Gospel in the Indian vernacular tongues, a system of Christian education in the mission schools has been maintained, and these schools are largely self-supporting. Nor has female education been forgotten, and signs are not wanting that these various agencies are beginning to tell. The heart of idolatry has been eaten away, knowledge has spread widely, and Christian books are carefully studied at the homes of the natives. Here and there men and women abandon their false gods; large congregations listen intently to the story of the Cross; multitudes of Hindu boys never become idolators at all; the landholder reads his Bible, and quietly drops caste customs; the Brahmin student, after hard struggles, becomes a Christian; the merchant and the shopkeeper are more easily won; the convert turns preacher, and wins more souls for Christ, whose religion is rooting itself in India as that of the future. The air is said to be full of change and restlessness and progress. The Madagascar mission came next. In this section of the report, mention was made of 1,200 Christian congregations in the island, numbering 250,000 souls. In China the London Missionary Society has nine stations, all cities of central importance. The work accomplished in the South Seas, and that undertaken of late in New Guinea, were next referred to. In connection with the society's labours in Africa, details were given of the mission about to be commenced on Lake Tanganyika. The Rev. G. S. Barrett moved the adoption of the report. It was seconded by the Rev. Thomas Sadler (missionary from Amoy), who said that the representatives of their twenty native churches and congregations in that city had asked him to convey to Christian friends in England their good wishes and thanks for all that had been done in giving them the Gospel. The message he thus brought was, he said, quite spontaneous; and from his heart he could say these Chinese people were grateful. He had been asked whether the Gospel had really laid hold of the people in China. Laid hold of the people! Why, it had laid hold of the learned man, and set him to study Christ, so that in a competitive examination of sermons he had taken a prize even from the native pastors. It had laid hold of the agriculturist, the man who was originally low and degraded, and who now went out to work in his fields glorifying the God of nature. It had laid hold of the tradesman and the artificer; and it had begun, where Christianity prevailed to stop the production of things used in idolatry. It had laid hold of the men who were earning their living as sorcerers; it had shown them that they dared not go on any longer in their course of falsehood. It had laid hold of the idolators. It was only the other day he heard of two temples that had become chapels, two temples in which the old gods had been displaced, and Christ now reigned. It had laid hold of the superstitious people, who had given up the ancestral worship, the most tremendous obstacle in the way of the Gospel in China. It had laid hold of the immoral—for notwithstanding their beautiful theories, society there was rotten to the core, and was best described in the first chapter to the Romans. The Chinese had a triad of vices—gambling, opium-smoking, and immorality. Well, the poor opium-smoker had come to Christ, and the Gospel had saved children from infanticide. Then Christianity had not only civilized the people in this way, but in a still higher way—namely, in the foundation of native churches and congregations. They settled down in the best centres we could find, and there had a house of God, a stated minister, the observation of the Sabbath-day, the circulation of the Scriptures, and all kinds of agencies for bringing the people to the truth. They must look upon these chapels as so many strongholds to attack the enemy. There had been a visible blessing on their native agencies.

The other speakers were the Rev. Dr. Falding (of Rotherham), the Rev. Dr. Edmond (of Highbury), and the Rev. A. D. Saville (from the South Seas).

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

This society held its eighty-fourth anniversary meeting at Exeter Hall, which was crowded in every part. Sir Robert Lush was in the chair. The report, which was read by Dr. Underhill, stated that some 99,000 copies of various portions of Scripture had left the Mission Press in Calcutta. Of these 66,000 copies were printed for the Calcutta Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The issues from the society's own depository have amounted to 34,188 copies. Many journeys for the purposes of evangelization have been made by the missionaries throughout districts in India. The general effect may be summed up in the remarkable state-

ment made by Professor Max Müller to the late Dr. Norman Macleod: "From what I know of the Hindus, they seem to me riper for Christianity than any nation that ever accepted the Gospel." By the liberal legacy of the late Mr. C. S. Leckie, amounting to £4,000, a new mission was about to be begun in Cachar, in the north-eastern part of Bengal. In Ceylon, China, Africa, Trinidad, and Hayti the mission work has been making progress. From Jamaica, Brittany, Norway, and Rome encouraging reports had been received. The financial statement, presented by Mr. Joseph Tritton, showed that though the year's receipts were unusually large, yet the committee had, "for the first time for several years, to report a diminution in the receipts from the churches;" and the expenditure having exceeded the income, the society were £4,354 in debt to the treasurer.

The Rev. J. M. Stephens, of Sheffield, in moving the first resolution, uttered some words of warm affection and sympathy for the missionaries in their arduous labours. He also urged the exercise of greater liberality on the part of the society's supporters. The Rev. Thomas Morgan, an experienced missionary from India, spoke of the magnitude of the work to be accomplished in that land, of its difficulties, and its encouragements. He went on to say: "There are 260,000,000 people, and the paramount power in India is Christian. God has given you the country; all hindrances are removed. We used to be taunted with the connection of the Government with idolatry, but all that is done away with. The Government now know that the missionaries are the best friends of the people, and they give them every encouragement as far as they consistently can. Then consider the wealth of the country. Forty years ago the foreign trade was £40,000,000, and last year it was £114,000,000. God says, 'I have given you the country, I have given you the money of the country, now give back a little of that money in order to establish My kingdom.' There is scarcely a village in many districts where there is not a school; so that the tracts and books that we distribute can be read. Many of the people treasure the Bible that they get from us, and often die with it in their hands, declaring that they believe in Christ. Hinduism has absolutely failed to improve the moral condition of the people. When I look at the authoritative command of the Redeemer, and at the apathy of the people of England in this matter, I stand aghast with horror. Here you have splendid chapels, splendid music, the very best sermons, and everything absolutely good, but if you look with indifference upon these moral evils that are dishonouring God, I do not know where your Christianity is. The first lesson of Christianity is self-denial; and if we do nothing for the heathen world, there is an abnegation at once of the very first principle of self-denial." The Rev. James Smith, of Delhi, gave some interesting details of the progress of the Gospel in India. "The difference between India now," he observed, "and India thirty-five years ago is far beyond my power to describe. I have no hesitation in saying that although I never doubted the ultimate success of the Lord's work in India, yet now, after all the time I have been there, I have more confidence in it than ever I had. First, let me refer to material things. When I went to India thirty-five years ago there was no roads. I then threaded my way across the mountains, and it was very nearly being the last chance of threading my way anywhere, for, while botanising a little on my road, I saw two tigers and a pair of cubs playing together, and I assure you I was not long in seeking a place of safety. We had to cross these mountains and follow a mere cart track. So it was throughout the whole of the provinces of India. Now, we have not only macadamised roads, but railways and telegraphs through the whole land." He gave other illustrations of material progress, and remarked that these had been seen by the Prince of Wales, adding: "I believe he passed his time in a noble manner, and that the impression he has made has been a good one. But the changes in religious matters in India have far outstripped all changes that have taken place in material things. In all my journeyings amongst the villagers formerly I could not obtain a drink of water. I was not permitted even to touch the drinking-vessels or the eating-vessels of the Hindus. Now there are thousands and thousands of people in the villages who are ready to feed us wherever we go, and unwilling to let us go without food. I agree with my brother that Hinduism is not dead; but I believe it has been to a large extent undermined. Many people now say, 'Why do you charge us with idolatry? We were all idolators formerly, but we are not so now. If we have not become Christians, our idols are gone, and we are far too advanced ever to bow down to stocks and stones, the workmanship of our own hands.' Wherever we go the people are not only ready for the Gospel, but anxious to listen to it, and they sometimes endeavour to keep us against our will when we are desirous

to pass on to more distant places." The Rev. F. Trestrail, who was the last speaker, dwelt upon the encouragements which exist to prosecute the work of missions and on the importance of recognizing the doctrine of the personality and influence of the Holy Spirit.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Archbishop of Canterbury presided at Willis's Rooms at the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary meeting of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.* The report stated that 528 missionaries were engaged in various fields of religious work. Among the speakers was Sir Bartle Frere, who said that the meeting would perhaps be glad to hear a few of the impressions which had been left on his mind during his recent journey in India. He could give a great amount of encouragement to those who were interested in the spread of Christianity in India, for he had just travelled over parts of that country where when he first went to India it would have been dangerous to send a missionary or any white man at all, and now in these districts he had found teachers of all denominations of Christianity busily employed in spreading the truths of the Gospel. No doubt could be entertained of the glorious results which would follow this increase of missionary institutions, for wherever he travelled in India he found communities of Christian people living under the ægis of the British Government without exciting any feelings of jealousy or ill-will on the part of the native population. The great safeguard of missionary enterprise was that there was no compulsion or any use made of the temporal sword to enforce the observance of the principles of the religion disseminated, and under such rules he found everywhere that the missions were in the most flourishing condition, although the cry was still for more hands to assist in the work. The Archbishop of Canterbury referred to the appointment of Dr. Caldwell and Dr. Sargent to new bishoprics in the diocese of Madras, and said that steps were also being taken with a view to the foundation of other bishoprics. The meeting was also addressed by the Right Rev. W. R. Macrorie, Bishop of Maritzburg, and che Rev. H. Badnall, Archdeacon of Capetown.

There was a large and attentive audience at the seventy-seventh annual meeting of the *Religious Tract Society* at Exeter Hall, Mr. Baxter, M.P., in the chair. From the report read by the Rev. Dr. S. Manning, in the absence from illness of the Secretary, Dr. Davis, it appeared there had been issued during the year 453 new publications, of which 162 were tracts, containing, with the reprints, 642,154,100 pages. The total circulation from the home depôt, including books, tracts, periodicals, cards, and miscellaneous issues, amounted to 51,979,489. Tracts to the number of 5,443,482 had been issued beyond those of last year. The issue from foreign depôts was, besides 11,000,000 grants of tracts and books made during the year to the London City Mission, Open Air and Theatre Service Missions, Home Missionary Society, etc., to the extent of £17,220. The total amount received from sales, missionary receipts, and all other sources, including last year's balance, is £146,821. The total expenditure in both trade and grant departments has been £145,303., leaving a balance in favour of the society of £1,518. The foreign operations of the society in Europe, Asia, and America were continued with unabated vigour. The passage in the report which excited most attention was that which referred to the steps taken by the society in promoting religious education among the young. Mr. Francis Peek offered to make over to the society the sum of £5,000 on condition that the society should provide Bibles and Testaments to the value of £500 annually as prizes to be competed for at voluntary examinations in Scripture knowledge by the children of the London School Boards. Special and handsomely bound editions of Bibles and Testaments were prepared, the text being in the paragraph form, with a small scriptural atlas at the end of each copy. These were offered as rewards to the 4,000 children who should display the most satisfactory acquaintance with Scripture. Upwards of 70,000 children entered themselves for examination, and of these about 50,000 were selected to compete for the prizes. In addition to the Chairman, the meeting was subsequently addressed by Bishop Anderson, the Rev. Archibald Brown, Dr. Donald Fraser, and the Rev. Joshua Harrison.

The *Church Pastoral-Aid Society* met at St. James's Hall; the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair. From the report, it appeared that 75 new grants had been made. The existing grants were for 623 clergymen and 239 lay assistants. The society provided 845 additional services on the Lord's-day, 596 on the week day, 894 schoolroom and cottage lectures, and 978 Bible classes. Altogether, it was calculated the influence of the society extended over a population amounting to nearly 5,000,000. The Rev. Canon Miller,

who moved the first resolution, maintained that much had yet to be done ere ragged schools were done away with; and when he saw the books on the tables of the aristocracy and wealthy middle-classes, he was filled with great fear. Actually some of the worst novels read by these classes were written by women. Equally to be deprecated was the state of the drama, and then there were the elaborate performances of music in our great cathedrals. All these things were much to be deplored. It was all nonsense to say people did not care about sermons; the Evangelical clergy who preached sound theology were always heard, but he feared too many of them omitted repentance and justification by faith. He feared the doctrine of the second coming of Christ was not preached as it ought to be. If they preached those doctrines with fervour, they would not need to preach perfectionism. The Rev. D. P. Morgan spoke of the benefit of the society to the Welsh Church. The Rev. Prebendary Cadman, the Hon. T. Pelham, and other gentlemen also spoke. The Earl of Shaftesbury, in replying to a vote of thanks, said the Lord Chancellor had said of him that he did not take a cheerful view of things; and this was right, as he felt how much was to be done before they could obtain the end in view. His lordship, referring to an ancestor of his as one who was disliked as much as he was by the bishops of his time, said he believed ecclesiastical reform was the safety of the Church. Ritualism was more rife and insolent than ever. He denounced the teaching in their denominational schools as tending to full-blown Ritualism, and that was why so many Board schools were established; and when there was a change of Government they would find that there would be no more grants to denominational schools, and then they would be shut up to Board schools, from which all religion was eliminated, and that would not suit the people of this country, who liked their religion to be of the very best. His lordship concluded by deprecating the abolition of the ragged schools.

The forty-first annual meeting of the *London City Mission* was held in Exeter Hall; the Marquis of Cholmondeley in the chair. Prayer having been offered by the newly appointed secretary (the Rev. Josiah Miller), the Chairman said a few words in commendation of the objects of the society, and the Rev. John Garwood read the report. From the facts stated, it appeared that there were now 450 missionaries at work in London in connection with the society, being an increase of thirteen during the year. The details went to show that the missionaries had made upwards of 2,700,000 visits to the homes of the neglected poor; that 1,596 drunkards had been reclaimed, 774 fallen women admitted to asylums or restored to their homes, 3,987 children sent to schools, 38,785 indoor meetings and Bible classes held, 3,518,775 tracts distributed, 13,725 copies of the Scriptures distributed, 336 persons restored to Church communion, and 1,598 new communicants added to churches. The income was the largest ever received in one year, being £47,047 14s. for the ordinary purposes, £1,152 for disabled missionaries, and £3,500 to be invested for the support of missionaries for a term of years. Lord Shaftesbury moved the adoption of the report. He said that objection was still taken in some quarters to the abnormal character of the society. It was abnormal, and that was why he liked it. No one who considered the seething masses of humanity, which were to be found in all their large towns, could for a moment believe that they could be dealt with efficiently by the regular agencies of all the churches and chapels of England put together, and therefore such a society as the City Mission became indispensable. He liked it also for its special work. It asserted and worked out the principle of individual selection, adapting itself to the varied interests of society, good and bad, and finding suitable agents for every kind of work. He liked especially the mission to the public-houses of London. The report clearly showed that that agency had been much wanted, and was doing a great work. Reference had been made to the visit of the American evangelists, and to the influence of Sankey's Sacred Hymns and Solos. He had been charmed with them, and he had found, in attending meetings of the poor, and in connection with their ragged gatherings in particular, that "Hold the Fort" had hold of all their hearts, and though sung again and again, was always new. Altogether, the City Mission was a great blessing to London. The Bishop of Melbourne had much pleasure in expressing his deliberate approval of the London City Mission. He would yield to none in his love for and attachment to the Church of England, but he regarded the true Church of Christ as including all the company of those who believed in Him; and while he respected order and ordination, he must yet say that he felt it became the duty of all the followers of Christ to seek in some way or another to reclaim the outcast and the perishing. Believing, as he did, in the true appointment of the ministry as of God, he

believed also in what the Earl of Shaftesbury had called the abnormal work of that society. A peculiar order of talent was required, and peculiar tact also, in dealing with the people who were visited by the agents of that society. That talent they had found. The report showed that the agents were also men of piety and tact; and the constitution being so catholic and evangelical, he could not but wish it God-speed. The other speakers were the Rev. Dr. James, the Rev. J. Cohen, the Rev. J. Graham, the Rev. Richard Roberts, and the Rev. R. C. Billing.

The *Colonial and Continental Church Society* held its anniversary at St. James's Hall. The Marquis of Cholmondeley presided, and among the speakers was the Rev. H. Pahtabquahong Chase (Chief of the Ojibbeway tribe, and President of the Grand Council of Indians, who wore a large medal sent to his grandfather by George III., and a smaller one, presented to him by the Prince of Wales during his visit to America). The report, which was read by the Rev. L. B. White, stated that there had been a greater number of applications for help from the colonies than usual. The Bishops of Melbourne, Sydney, and Ballarat had earnestly pleaded for grants to aid them in supplying their deficiency of clergy. The work among sailors in several foreign ports had been carried on as usual by the society's chaplains. With regard to the society's Continental operations, services were conducted last summer at sixty-seven stations, two of which—Constaine and Mounetier—were newly occupied. About 170 clergymen were required to carry on the services on the Continent. It was added that the committee were endeavouring to make arrangements for extending the summer chaplaincies to Norway. On the motion of Canon Miller, and seconded by Captain the Hon. F. Maude, R.N., the report was adopted, and addresses were afterwards delivered by Archdeacon Kitton, the Rev. W. B. Carpenter, the Rev. Dr. Forbes, of Paris, and the Rev. H. Pahtahquahong Chase, who expressed his own gratitude and that of his tribe for the assistance received from the society, and stated that since he had arrived in England he had collected sufficient funds to build a new church.

At the annual meeting of the *Protestant Reformation Society* Sir T. Chambers, Q.C., presided. Reports were read from the various stations of the society in the provinces. The Chairman said the object of the society was to convince Roman Catholics of the errors of the Romish faith. It was a great calamity that so many parties in the Established Church of the country were now actively endeavouring to pervert others, and bring them over to the Romish faith. This showed the value of this and other similar societies. Among the resolutions adopted was the following: "That the epithets of old applied to Protestants, 'The Hold Fasts,' it becomes us in these days to receive and to commend to all who waver or are tempted by the seductions of Romanism."

The anniversary of the *Ragged School Union* was celebrated and the distribution of scholars' prizes took place in Exeter Hall, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair. The principal business was the distribution of 509 prizes to boys and girls who had been in service a year. In the course of the proceedings, the children were addressed by the Rev. Dr. Edmond, and resolutions adopting the report, acknowledging the value of the many agencies connected with ragged schools, and thanking the Earl of Shaftesbury for his presidency, were moved by the Rev. Dr. Cumming, the Rev. R. C. Billing, B.A., and the Rev. J. Malcolmson. In concluding the proceedings, the Earl of Shaftesbury said they had 5,000 children; that was better than nothing, and they would do all they could to resist the aggressions of the School Board. They had taken 220,000 children off the streets, who would otherwise have made London a city of devils, and their opponents had gained a victory, but he preferred his defeat to their victory. The proceedings were closed with "God save the Queen." An attractive feature in the proceedings of this meeting was the singing of a number of melodies by the 500 boys and girls formerly scholars in ragged schools.

*** In the table of receipts contained in the following page are included the *gross* amounts received by the Bible and Religious Tract Societies. Of the £222,320 received by the British and Foreign Bible Society, £105,410 was for Bibles and Testaments. The £146,821 received by the Religious Tract Society is also inclusive of both benevolent and trade receipts.

RECEIPTS REPORTED AT THE RELIGIOUS ANNIVERSARIES.

	1875.		1876.	
British and Foreign Bible Society	£222,191			£222,320
Principal Foreign Missionary Societies—				
Church Missionary Society	175,835		195,116	
Wesleyan Missionary Society	179,946		159,106	
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel	134,826		125,294	
London Missionary Society	103,553		114,853	
Baptist Missionary Society	40,121		44,762	
Moravian Missions	18,371		21,369	
South American Missionary Society	13,727		13,659	
English Presbyterian Missions	10,248		8,850	
				683,009
Colonial, Jewish, and other Missions—				
Primitive Methodist Missions	46,706		42,917	
Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews	37,317		41,363	
Colonial and Continental Church Society	36,364		33,487	
United Methodist Free Churches' Missions	11,019		16,542	
British Society for the Jews	8,076		7,601	
Colonial Missionary Society	3,252		4,022	
Evangelical Continental Society	3,878		3,297	
Foreign Aid Society	3,510		2,960	
				152,189
Home Missions—				
Additional Curates Society	60,960		67,287	
Church Pastoral-Aid Society	56,546		57,114	
London City Mission	46,070		48,199	
Wesleyan Home Missions	32,000		36,379	
Bishop of London's Fund	25,515		29,768	
Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics	22,987		19,523	
Missions to Seamen	10,722		12,391	
Church of England Scripture Readers' Association	10,254		10,588	
Army Scripture Readers' Society	9,156		9,270	
Incorporated Church Building Society	12,623		8,561	
British and Foreign Sailors' Society	5,704		6,130	
Protestant Reformation Society	7,367		5,232	
British and Irish Baptist Home Missions	5,100		4,853	
Home Missionary Society (Congregational)	4,512		4,802	
Irish Evangelical Society	2,964		3,015	
The Prison Mission	4,418		2,479	
Royal Naval Scripture Readers' Society	2,163		2,177	
Midnight Meeting Movement	1,916		1,789	
				329,557
Religious Educational Societies—				
British and Foreign School Society	20,547		26,066	
Christian Vernacular Education Society for India	8,668		12,842	
Indian Female Normal School Society	8,723		11,606	
Wesleyan Education Committee	8,654		8,284	
Home and Colonial School Society	7,660		7,558	
Ragged School Union	3,789		4,194	
British Syrian School Association	5,966		3,906	
Sunday School Union	3,016		3,899	
				78,355
Miscellaneous—				
Religious Tract Society	144,566		146,821	
Book Society	7,105		7,069	
Church Association	7,858		5,964	
Young Men's Christian Association	3,659		3,703	
Monthly Tract Society	3,062		3,395	
Bible Translation Society	2,438		3,165	
Christian Association for Young Women	1,878		1,921	
Church of England Sunday-school Institute	1,391		1,616	
Lord's-day Observance Society	1,000		1,479	
				175,133
	£1,609,897			£1,640,563

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

The inaugural address of the Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales (the Rev. Thomas Aveling, D.D.) was delivered in the City Temple. The topic was, "Within the fold." Dr. Aveling spoke first of the pastors, insisting that they must be leaders in spiritual things and leaders intellectually. Their ministers would be nothing if they could not present superior spiritual and intellectual gifts. The whole community was becoming instinct with intelligence, a cheap press was multiplying the productions of the best writers as well as the worst, and sermons were being discussed by the back pews no less than by the front. They must not deprecate this, even if the criticism was not always fair. Anything was better than dead apathy, which thinks it too much trouble even to object. The words of Professor Morley were quoted: "Those who dwell in the tower of ancient faith look about them with constant apprehension, misgivings, and wonder—with the hurried, uneasy mien of those living amid earthquakes. The religion of the present is no longer an organic power. Old hopes have grown pale, old fears dim; the strong have become weak, and once vivid faiths very numb." Dr. Aveling, on the contrary, said they need fear nothing. Like Cadmus, the men of letters and philosophy were sowing dragon's teeth, whence an armed host would spring to destroy, as they thought, religious belief. But, as in the fable, an invisible hand would throw a stone in their midst, and make them fight with one another till but few remained, and these would assist in building the city of God. The address then passed to the work of the pastors within the fold. Dr. Aveling spoke of the conduct the several portions of public worship, giving his views as to each, and dwelling especially upon the importance of preaching. From remarks on these and kindred points, addressed to the sheep "within the fold," he went on to speak of "the lambs of the flock," and the importance of Sunday-schools and Bible-classes. Among other matters, he also adverted to revivalism and pastoral support. The business discussions of the Union took place, for the most part, at the Memorial Hall.

THE BAPTIST UNION.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland met at Bloomsbury Chapel. The President for the year, the Rev. Dr. Landels, in his opening address, congratulated the meeting on the position to which the Union had attained. Their great want was denominational organization. They were only entering upon a course of mutual helpfulness, on which other bodies were already far advanced. As a denomination, they were poor, many of their churches were very small, and, as the consequence, their ministers were inadequately remunerated. In all England there are only about 210 churches which contain more than 200 members, over 300 which contain between 100 and 200, and over 1,200 which contain less than 100 members. About 420 of these churches are without pastors, including 300 too small to obtain them. We have thus about 1,400 pastors dependent on the churches for support, 900 of them, or thereabouts, being connected with churches that do not contain 100 members; 300 of them, or thereabouts, with churches containing between 100 and 200 members; and 200, or thereabouts, with churches that contain a larger number. But even these do not fully represent the difficulties of the situation. Among the churches that contain less than 100 members there are a large proportion—over 600—which do not contain half that number, and these do not include the churches—a considerable number—which, strange to say, report exactly fifty. If from these smaller churches we deduct the 300 which are understood to dispense with a paid pastor, then we have 600 pastors dependent on churches with less than 100 members; and 300 pastors dependent on churches whose membership does not amount to fifty. Among the smaller churches there are a few whose membership is represented by one figure, two churches containing not more than two communicants each. The principal means of improving the position of the ministers was for the wealthy members and the large churches to help the small. In conclusion, he exhorted them to seek a closer union. The tendency within, combined with the pressure from without, moved them in this direction. The removal of many of their brethren, some who had long stood like towers of strength among them, and others who had been taken while the promise of their life had been but partially realized, was a reason for their being found at their posts, seeking unitedly and with all their strength the restoration to God of a rebellious and ruined world.

DISTRIBUTION OF SCRIPTURE PRIZES AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

A new feature in the metropolitan engagements of the month of May will henceforth be the distribution of prizes, consisting of Bibles and Testaments, to successful competitors in schools of the London School Board.

This novel and admirable scheme originated in the munificence of Mr. Francis Peek, as described in our account of the anniversary of the Religious Tract Society (p. 179).

The distribution of the prizes—the first occasion of the kind—took place on Saturday, the 13th ult., at the Crystal Palace. The children filled the Handel Orchestra, and the audience numbered little less than 20,000. The chair was taken by Mr. W. E. Forster, M.P., who with Mr. S. Morley, M.P., Mr. Francis Peek, and others, addressed the children. The 4,000 prizes and also 5,800 certificates of Scripture knowledge were then awarded. Eighty of the pupil-teachers and scholars who had most distinguished themselves in the examination then proceeded to the platform, under the direction of Mr. Ricks, the Board's Inspector, and received from Mr. Forster the Bibles and Testaments, while the children in the orchestra had theirs given by the teachers. When Mr. Forster had given the eighty the gifts they had won, the children in the orchestra held up the books they had received, and the sight was much applauded.

The Rev. Dr. Manning, on behalf of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, then rose to make a presentation of the Bible (in three volumes) to Mr. Forster, who, in reply, said it was one of the most valuable gifts he had ever received. He called upon the audience to thank Mr. Peek by cheers—an appeal which was heartily responded to.

Evangelical Alliance.

PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL.

A meeting of Council was held on Tuesday, May 9; John Rylands, Esq., of Manchester, in the chair. A devotional service was held during the first half-hour of the meeting, special prayer being offered for the divine blessing to attend the anniversary meetings at this season of the year. The Scriptures having been read by the Chairman, prayers were offered by the Rev. Messrs. Carr Glyn, Shoobridge, and Tyler, and Mr. Ellis, who also read portions of Scripture.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following persons were unanimously admitted to membership:—

Isaac Lowthian, Esq., Carlisle.
Mrs. Page, Carlisle.
Mrs. Rawson, Carlisle.
R. A. Allison, Esq., Carlisle.
J. C. Carr, Esq., Carlisle.
James N. Carr, Esq., Carlisle.
Captain and Mrs. Morton, Carlisle.
Mrs. Saul, Carlisle.
Charles Bernard Hodgson, Esq., Carlisle.
Miss Helen Gib Ellis, Edinburgh.
Miss Margaret M. Ellis, Edinburgh.
The Rev. A. W. Hallen, Alloa.
Miss McDowall, Alloa.
A. Forrester Paton, Esq., Alloa.
John Baker, Esq., Alloa.
John Gilkinson, Esq., Alloa.
Rev. James Drummond, Alloa.
Thos. Brydie, Esq., and Mrs. Brydie, Alloa.
R. H. D. Mahon, Esq., Alloa.
Miss Wingate, Alloa.
Joseph Bailey, Esq., Alloa.
Mrs. Maunsell, Bishop's Waltham.

OBITUARY.

A letter was read from Lausanne, announcing the death of Pastor Jayet, late President of the Swiss Committee of the French-speaking Branch of the Evangelical Alliance. The Council desire to record their deep appreciation of the Christian character of that venerable servant of our Lord, and of his valued services to the cause of Christian union in his native land. They instruct the Secretary to convey the expression of their regret and affectionate sympathy to the members of his family.

The Council also heard with sorrow of the recent decease of their esteemed friend and colleague, the late G. H. Davis, Esq., LL.D., Secretary of the Religious Tract Society.

Cherishing a grateful remembrance of the valuable aid often rendered to their deliberations by their departed friend, they desire to record their deep sense of the loss sustained, not only by themselves, but by the Christian Church at large, both at home and abroad.

The Council instructed the Secretary to attend the funeral on their behalf, and to assure the widow and family of their Christian sympathy with them in their bereavement, and prayer that they may be sustained and solaced by the grace of the Divine Comforter.

CONVERSAZIONE.

The Secretary reported arrangements made for the proposed Conversazione at the National Club on May 18th. Representatives of various Continental and other branches of the

Evangelical Alliance had expressed their intention to be present. Numerous persons, including noblemen, members of Parliament, clergymen, and others, had accepted the invitation. On the suggestion of the Secretary, a committee was appointed to assist in carrying out the arrangements.

THANKSGIVING.

A letter from a member of this Council was read, suggesting that the branches of this Alliance throughout the United Kingdom should be invited to hold united meetings for praise and prayer specially to acknowledge the Lord's goodness in answering the supplications which have been offered for the safety of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. The subject having been considered, it was moved by Colonel the Hon. Strange Jocelyn, seconded by the Rev. F. J. Johnson, D.D., and resolved:—

That, acknowledging the goodness of Almighty God graciously vouchsafed in answering the united prayers put up for his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales's health and safety on the occasion of his departure for India, the Council now suggest to the members of the various branches of the Alliance throughout the United Kingdom, and others favourable to the object, the offering of united thanksgiving and praise for his Royal Highness's safe return, and that Thursday, the 18th inst., be named for this purpose.

IMPERIAL COMMUNICATION.

The Secretary reported that having, with the permission given by her Imperial Majesty, sent the Empress of Germany the April number of *Evangelical Christendom*, he had received the following acknowledgment:—

"Berlin, April 11, 1876.

"The Empress-Queen has received with much interest the Rev. James Davis's letter of April 5, and the monthly record of the transactions of the Evangelical Alliance.

"The Empress-Queen begs to thank Mr. Davis for his communication, and shall always be glad to hear about any progress of their common good cause.

"The Rev. James Davis,
Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance,
London."

NEXT ASSOCIATIONAL CONFERENCE.

The Secretary reported that he had met the Committee of the Southport Branch of the Alliance on Monday, May 1, when various subjects connected with the arrangements for the next Annual Conference were considered. The last week in September or the beginning of October was suggested as a suitable time for holding the Conference.

NEXT GENERAL CONFERENCE.

A communication was reported from the President of the Bâle Committee of the Swiss Organization of the Alliance, stating that a meeting had lately been held in that city to consider the proposal of holding there the next General Conference of Evangelical Christians of various nations. About seventy persons were present, and after a lengthened discussion, a decision was arrived at that the circumstances were not at present favourable for holding such a conference in Bâle.

LORD'S-DAY OBSERVANCE IN SWITZERLAND.

A letter was read from M. Alexander Lombard, dated Geneva, May 3rd, stating that a Congress was proposed to be held in that city in September next by the Swiss Society for promoting the observance of the Lord's-day. The letter reports that the society, which had its origin at the Alliance Conference in 1862, had, by the Divine blessing, greatly prospered and borne useful results throughout Switzerland. Similar societies had, through its operation, been formed in various countries, and there was reason to believe that the number was likely to increase. Our Swiss friends were desirous of uniting the different committees into one organization for mutual correspondence and united action, and encouraged to believe that that object might be accomplished, the Geneva Committee desired the aid of their English friends interested in the important object. The letter adds: "We cannot forget the part which the Evangelical Alliance took in the formation of our society, and the many proofs we have since had of the lively interest taken by its members in our work, and also the kind aid given to our efforts on several occasions; we therefore send to your Council a very cordial invitation to be present at the Congress."

The Secretary was instructed to acknowledge M. Lombard's letter, and to express the pleasure with which they had received his communication, the object promoted by the Swiss Society being one which this Alliance, from its formation, has had in view as claiming the sympathy and calling for the united action of Christians of all denominations and of all countries. The Council will be happy to comply with M. Lombard's request relative to the appointment of a representative, to be present at the Congress in September next.

PROVINCIAL VISITATION.

The Secretary reported, that since last meeting he had visited several important towns in the provinces. At Carlisle, a drawing-room meeting was held at Houghton House,

the residence of Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Hodgson. A numerous party assembled, consisting of neighbouring clergy, ministers, and gentry, and warm sympathy was expressed with the objects and operations of the Society, many persons giving in their names for membership. At Edinburgh, a public breakfast meeting had been held on the morning of May 3, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Duff, President of the Edinburgh Branch of the Alliance. A considerable number of ladies and gentlemen sat down to breakfast, and after prayer by Professor de la Harpe, a powerful address was delivered by the Chairman, referring to the formation, progress, and usefulness in many lands of the society, and dwelling especially on the importance of each local branch carrying out the objects of the Alliance in its own city and town, as well as supporting the parent society in its general operations. Addresses were also given by Findlay Anderson, Esq., R. A. Macfie, Esq., Professor de la Harpe, Rev. J. Davis, and others.

At Alloa, a meeting was held in the drawing-room of David Paton, Esq., largely attended by the local clergy and laity. Much interest was expressed in the transactions of the Alliance, and a committee, with secretary and treasurer, was appointed to act in concert with the parent society, and carry out in Alloa and its neighbourhood such objects as can best be promoted by united action. Invitations to hold meetings in other parts of Scotland were given to the Secretary, the acceptance of which he was obliged to postpone. Mr. Davis also reported his visit to Bath, to be present at the anniversary meetings of that association, held in the afternoon and evening of the 8th of May.

The Council having heard and approved the Secretary's report, instructed him to convey their best thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson, of Carlisle, and to David Paton, Esq., of Alloa, for their kindness in holding drawing-room meetings on the occasion of Mr. Davis's visit, and for the valuable service rendered thereby to the general purposes of the Alliance.

FINANCE.

The cash statement for the ten months ending April 29 was presented, showing receipts amounting to £1,819 5s. 8d.; payments, £1,603 1s. 2d.; balance of assets over liabilities, £73 2s. 8d.

ADDRESS OF THE REV. DR. DUFF ON THE HISTORY AND PROGRESS OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE,

DELIVERED AT A MEETING HELD IN EDINBURGH ON MAY 3.

As a generation had now elapsed since the Evangelical Alliance was first formed, and no public meeting of the Edinburgh Branch had been held for some time past, he thought it proper at the outset briefly to allude to its origin and objects; leaving it to Mr. Davis, the Secretary, with whose presence they were favoured that morning, to furnish such details of its recent operations as might prove interesting to all present. The external divisions of Protestantism had long been a scandal, an offence, and a weakness; and this was felt all the more by thoughtful minds, because, while in Romanism there was outward ecclesiastical uniformity, with a thousand conflicting elements lurking underneath, it was the very contrary with Protestantism. Underneath the outward divisions of the latter it was known that there lay concealed not only much of a real unity of spirit, but of a substantial unity of doctrine. Hence the gradually growing desire of Christians in many lands for some definite external manifestation of this essential unity. At last, in different quarters, this desire began to find articulate utterance. At the commemoration of the Bi-centenary of the Westminster Assembly in 1843, the late Dr. Balmer, of Berwick, powerfully advocated the paramount claims of Christian unity. His impressive advocacy suggested to the late Mr. Henderson, of Park, the idea of instituting some practical measure for its furtherance and attainment. At first the proposal of a prize essay was thought of, but, for various reasons, that was soon abandoned. It was then resolved to apply to several distinguished ministers of different denominations, believed to be favourable to the object, for an essay on some important theme bearing on Christian union. Those applied to were Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Candlish, of the Free Church; Dr. Balmer and Dr. King, of the then United Secession Church; Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Angell James, of the Congregational body; Dr. Symington, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; and Dr. Struthers, of the Relief Church. All cheerfully responded to the call, and their essays were published in a volume and widely circulated under the title of "Essays on Christian Union." In March, 1843, without any previous concert with parties on this side the Atlantic, Dr. Patton, of the Presbyterian Church, New York, in a

letter to Mr. Angell James, of Birmingham, after referring to the growing arrogance, assumption, and aggressive activities of Romanists and Prelatists, declared his conviction that the time could not be far distant when it would be most proper to call a convention of delegates from all Evangelical Churches, to meet in London, for the purpose of setting forth the great essential truths in which they are agreed. He then urged Mr. James to open a correspondence with leading ministers of all Evangelical denominations on the subject. Extracts from this letter were published by Mr. James in the Appendix to his contribution to the volume of "Essays on Christian Union." At last, as the result of a great variety of preparatory movements, in August, 1846, there assembled in London lay and clerical representatives from all orthodox denominations in Great Britain and Ireland, France, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Asia Minor, India, and the United States of America and Canada. An Œcumenical Council or General Evangelical Alliance was duly constituted, and after much earnest and grave discussion, the following articles of faith were adopted as its declared basis: 1. The divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures. 2. The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. 3. The unity of the Godhead and the Trinity of Persons therein. 4. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall. 5. The Incarnation of the Son of God, His work of atonement for sinners of mankind, and His mediatorial intercession and reign. 6. The justification of the sinner by faith alone. 7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner. 8. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked. 9. The divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the obligation and the perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Such were the articles which constituted the basis of the Alliance—by some pronounced too many, by others too few. But when viewed retrospectively, in the light of all that had since transpired in the theological world, where every one of them has been denied, or scouted, or caricatured, not only by avowed enemies, but by professed friends, they might well regard them with devout and grateful admiration as a mighty breakwater interposed by Providence, in the face of all nations, for arresting the surging billows of Rationalism and Romanism, and Infidelity, now so violently beating against the shores and landmarks of revealed truth. To obviate sundry mischievous allegations and misconceptions current at the time, great pains were taken to show that the articles adopted were not intended in any strict ecclesiastical sense, as a new creed or confession; that they were not meant to be exhaustive of Christian doctrine, but only to indicate in a general way the class of persons that might be safely invited to membership in the Alliance; that the Alliance itself never was designed to be of the nature of a regular ecclesiastical organization, assuming and discharging the functions of a Christian Church; that, on the contrary, its members, without renouncing any of their own distinctive religious convictions or denominational peculiarities, were only required to exercise kindness, tender-heartedness, forbearance, and charity in all matters in which they differed from others. To diffuse far and wide the beneficial influences of the Alliance, it was expected and desired that branch associations should be organized in the cities and provinces of all lands where Evangelical Christians in any considerable numbers were to be found; and that from time to time meetings of the General Council or conferences should be held in different countries. The first General Council of the Alliance, subsequent to its original promotion, was held in London in 1851—the year of the Great Exhibition of the works of industry of all nations; the second was held in Paris in 1855; the third in Berlin in 1857; the fourth in Geneva in 1861; the fifth in Amsterdam in 1867; the sixth in New York in 1873. As this was the last, and in some respects the most remarkable of all the General Councils, it would be well briefly to note the character of its proceedings, as the most effective way of exhibiting the leading objects aimed at by the Alliance. The proceedings lasted for ten days. Carefully prepared reports were first of all made on "the state of religion" in various Christian countries—France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Scandinavia, Italy, Spain, Greece, the British Provinces of North America, and the West Indies. Elaborate papers were read on "Christian Union," in its varied phases, as well as the modes of its promotion and manifestation; on "Christianity and its Antagonisms," alike in their theological, philosophical, scientific, and literary aspects; on "Christian Life," including the subjects of personal and family religion,

education, and literature, the pulpit of the age, Sunday-schools, and Christian associations; "Modern Romanism and Protestantism," in their theoretic and practical developments, viewed in connection with the evangelization of Papal countries; "Christianity and Civil Government," the relations of Church and State, civil and religious liberty, the duty and measure of ministerial support; "Christian Missions, Home and Foreign," the principles of mission work, and particular missionary fields; "Christianity and Social Reforms," including such subjects as the labour question, general philanthropy, the care of the sick, intemperance and its suppression, Christianity in its relations to crime and criminals, industrial schools as an agency in the prevention of crime. Under these general headings a vast variety of topics were considered or discussed which it would occupy a great deal too much time to attempt to enumerate. But even this brief summarized catalogue of them cannot fail to display the vast range of objects and operations contemplated by the Alliance, and ought to be enough to annihilate the scornful reproach that its meetings are designed merely for the interchange of personal greetings, sweet smiles, and pleasant talk, ending in froth and foam and utter unfruitfulness. It never was its pretension or business to frame resolutions of an authoritative or legislative character, or to commit its members to the adoption of specific measures or the establishment of separate and independent agencies for carrying out the various objects approved of and recommended by it. No; its primary design, as already stated, from the first had been, in an age of strife and contention, rents and schisms, variance and bitter controversy like the present, to elicit and manifest the latent unity of spirit in the breasts of all Evangelical Christians, based on their cordial reception of the same fundamental truths of divine revelation; and by comparison of the findings of observation and experience, by free discussion and exchange of opinions in the bonds of brotherly love, to stimulate the members, and through these the different bodies or churches to which they severally belong, to earnest thought, healthful inquiry, and hearty co-operation in every department of Christian usefulness. Surely the realization of such a result were no mean, no insignificant achievement. Let us, then, one and all of us, strive to act in the spirit and for the attainment of the objects of our Evangelical Alliance. Since it is the very nature of opposition to dissever and scatter, and the very nature of coincidence to bind and cement; since the former is the source of discord and separation, and the latter the basis of harmony and union,—does it not seem most natural, most reasonable, most Christian, that we should first endeavour to inquire into, and point out, those subjects on which we are all agreed to weigh and duly estimate their importance? And should they be found to involve none other than those grand transcendent verities which alone lay the foundation of real concord on earth and true blessedness in heaven, may we not well rejoice to allow our comparatively minor points of difference to be cast by these into the shade, for the sake of enjoying in happy and undisturbed union the bright effulgence of their glory? In the endeavour, therefore, to secure and perpetuate such a spirit of unanimity and mutual forbearance, in inseparable combination with concurrent or co-operative action of the mind already indicated—a spirit fraught with such blessings within the bounds of any church and the confines of contiguous churches—let us pray God with our whole heart and soul that all envy and jealousy, and party spirit and sinister motive, may be wholly eradicated and banished for ever from our naturally deceitful hearts; and that nothing may be allowed to interfere with the attainment of so glorious a consummation, short of the relinquishment of some really vital principle, or a base compromise of some essential divine prerogative.

LORD'S-DAY OBSERVANCE ON THE CONTINENT.

The following is a translation of the circular address issued by the Swiss Society for the Sanctification of the Lord's-day.

Congress on the Observance of the Lord's-day.

Geneva, April, 1876.

For several years the attention of serious persons has been directed to the increasing violation of the rest and sanctification of the Lord's-day. Many have thought that there was in this circumstance a sad indication of religious declension, and a serious danger as regards the true interests of individuals, of families, and of society at large. On this account there have been formed in various places associations having for their object to expose the evil and to resist it, as well as to apply the remedy, by all means in their power. It may truly be said that already, by the divine blessing, these efforts have not been fruitless. They have especially met with a lively sympathy among those who have been the greatest sufferers, both in their

body and in their spirit, from the demands, often tyrannical, made in the interests of industry and of commerce.

But the results actually obtained are small in comparison with the great object sought to be accomplished. The Central Committee of the Swiss Society for the Sanctification of the Lord's-day has thought that an unquestionable advantage would be gained by uniting at a Congress the Protestant societies specially occupied in promoting this object. Such Congress would enable the different societies to communicate their experience, supply valuable information, and render mutual aid in promoting their common work. It would also be a favourable opportunity for bringing together persons who, not having already joined any of the existing societies, nevertheless sympathize with the common cause, and are able to render valuable service. It might also prove the means of moving powerfully and effectually public opinion in the right direction.

The Central Swiss Committee has, therefore, resolved to convene in this city delegates from the different societies engaged in promoting the observance of the Lord's-day, and others favourable to the object in the various countries of Europe. The Committee have fixed Thursday, 28th of September, and two following days, for the Conference.

Each country will be requested to supply a report on the Sabbath question, dealing with its social as well as its purely religious aspects.

One meeting will be devoted to the following subject: "The best means of influencing societies in favour of Sunday observance, increasing their number, and combining their efforts for the common cause."

Another meeting will be occupied with the question, What steps should be taken to obtain for persons engaged in the public service, and especially those employed on the railways, rest on the Lord's-day, of which so many are now deprived? For the consideration of this question special efforts will be made to obtain the aid of persons able to appreciate the difficulties that have to be overcome and the interests that have to be protected.

Two principal and popular Conferences will be held, one in the French language and the other in the German, on the necessity for the observance and sanctification of the Lord's-day.

The Swiss Central Committee, which undertakes the arrangements for the proposed Congress, is fully conscious of the large responsibility laid upon it. It ventures to appeal for, next to the help sought for from on high, the active co-operation of those societies which are already engaged in this work.

In the fullest confidence the members of the Committee address this circular to their brethren, and place at the head of their programme—"REMEMBER THE SABBATH-DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY."

SOUTH LONDON SUB-DIVISION.

The monthly social meeting of the Committee and friends of this branch of the Alliance was held on Friday evening, the 19th ult., at the residence of the Rev. William Arthur, M.A., Clapham Common, and was largely attended. After tea and coffee had been served, the company assembled in the drawing-room under the presidency of W. Marten Smith, Esq., in place of Mr. Arthur, who is still suffering from loss of voice.

Portions of Scripture were read by Mr. Smith and by Mr. Faulconer, and prayer was offered by Messrs. Beare and Pocock.

The Chairman, on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur, cordially welcomed the Christian friends present, and specially referred to the visitors from Germany, Sweden, Holland, and America with them on this occasion. He also expressed the sympathy felt by all present with Mr. Arthur in his present affliction, and the earnest hope that he may speedily be restored.

Pastor Sandberger (of Wurtemberg) in a few words expressed his great pleasure in meeting so many brethren. His visit to England had given him great encouragement and increased his deep interest in the Evangelical Alliance.

Pastor Lindblom (of Stockholm) then gave some account of the religious awakening among Sunday-school scholars and among the teachers during the last year in Sweden. He traced the origin of Sunday-schools to the visit of a Swedish pastor who came to England in 1851. In Stockholm classes had been lately established for the study of the Bible, and among the regular attendants might be found members of various churches, and even noblemen, state officials, and other influential persons. Mr. Lindblom also answered questions as to the state of religious liberty in Sweden.

George Brandt, Esq. (of Amsterdam), expressed his pleasure at being present. Though a resident in Holland, he was a Dane; but

he was free to say that he always felt at home in England, and specially was he glad to meet with fellow-members of the great Alliance.

Pastor Kolb (from Wurtemberg) felt that the members of the Alliance were more than ever called upon to unite against the common foes, who were both refined and subtle, as well as gross and materialistic.

The Rev. Dr. Milburn — "the blind preacher of America," as he is called—in an eloquent address referred to the formation of the Alliance thirty years ago, and to what had been accomplished since. There is a power now which never existed before in united Christianity. In America they had had lately a blessed work of revival, and he more than ever believed, however able the opponents of true Christianity might be, that God is greater than all our enemies.

The Rev. Dr. Fisher and Dr. Gill also spoke briefly of the value of the Evangelical Alliance as a bond of union among Christians.

The meeting was closed with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Fisher, and the company separated after partaking of refreshments.

ALLIANCE CONVERSAZIONE AT THE NATIONAL CLUB.

The annual meeting this year of the members of the Alliance, and other friends of Christian union, took place on Thursday, May 18, in the Rooms of the National Club, Whitehall, kindly placed at their disposal by the Committee of the Club. The assembly was very large, including the Earl of Chichester, Lord Waveney, Lord A. S. Churchill, the Right Rev. Bishop Ryan, the Hon. and Rev. E. V. Bligh, Colonel the Hon. Strange Jocelyn, Captain the Hon. F. Maude, R.N.; the Hon. Thomas Pelham, Sir Harry Verney, Bart.; Sir Thomas M'Clure, Bart.; Sir Henry Havelock, Bart., M.P.; Sir John Coode, C. M. Campbell, Esq., M.P.; C. E. Cawley, Esq., M.P.; W. T. Charley, Esq., M.P.; Thomas Cave, Esq., M.P.; J. M. Holt, Esq., M.P.; Robert Heath, Esq., M.P.; E. Jenkins, Esq., M.P.; A. M'Arthur, Esq., M.P.; also M. E. de Pressensé, of Paris; Pastor Duchemin, of Lyons; Professor Aimé Humbert, of Neuchâtel; Pastor Buscarlet, of Lausanne; Pastors Kolb and Sandberger, of Wurtemberg; Pastor Bertelsen, from Denmark; Pastor Lindblom, of Stockholm; Pastor Garabedian, of Brousa, Turkey; George Brandt, Esq., of Amsterdam; Rev. Dr. Bliss, of Beyrout; Rev. H. P. Chase, of Canada; Rev. J. Sadler, of Amoy, China; General Alexander, General Burrows, Colonel Beamish, Colonel Wilmot Brooke, Colonel Gawler, Colonel Lawford, Colonel Nolloth; Revs. William Allan, R. S. Ashton, Canon Auriol, Dr. Aveling, Samuel Bardsley, L. D. Bevan, Francis Cooper, R. H. Davies, James Davis, C. C. Domville, James Fleming, Dr. Donald Fraser, C. B. Gibson, H. F. S. Gurney, Dr. John Harrison, J. Hiles Hitchens, W. J. Holder, Robert Johnston, John Jones, R. H. Killick, H. J. Knapp, James Long, H. V. Macdonna, J. T. Manley, J. Manners, Dr. Nolan, J. S. Russell, S. Shoobridge, Henry Simon, G. H. Stanton, S. D. Stubbs, John Sugden, W. P. Tiddy, L. S. Tugwell, P. J. Turquand, Dr. O. H. White, H. M. Waddell, A. Williams, J. Williams; Messrs. T. R. Andrews, H. J. Atkinson, Edward Bailey, T. Bamford, Percy Bankart, J. Braithwaite, T. Percival Bunting, A. G. Burnett, John Cheetham, John Church, Dr. Cleveland, J. Compton, John Corderoy, James Douglas, W. R. Ellis, John Finch, J. F. Fortescue, Thos. Garnett, Dr. Gill, J. Girdlestone, Lockhart Gordon, J. Groom, Samuel Gurney, J. L. Hadley, Robert Johnston, S. Kirby, G. Kirkham, A. Mackie, W. B. Maingay, Donald Matheson, Wm. Morris, W. Nicks, J. F. Oakey, W. H. Peters, H. W. Prockter, B. Ranyard, John Rylands, J. Sage, T. Sercombe, H. W. Shackell, J. Holt Skinner, W. Marten Smith, Ebenezer Stiff, H. C. Stuart, W. Tagg, J. Taylor, E. Thomas, J. Townley, T. R. Tufnell, William Ward, R. T. Webb, etc.

At four o'clock tea and coffee were supplied to the visitors, and at half-past four the general meeting was opened by the Earl of Chichester taking the chair. In calling upon the Rev. Dr. Nolan to read the Scriptures and offer prayer, his lordship referred to the circumstance that the Council of the Alliance had suggested that day for special thanksgiving and praise to be offered to Almighty God by the members of the Alliance throughout the United Kingdom for the safe return of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Earnest thanksgiving was accordingly presented by Dr. Nolan, in which the whole assembly joined.

The Earl of Chichester said it gave him very great pleasure to see so many friends gathered together, and especially to see so many Protestant brethren from abroad, as it showed that they acknowledged each other as members of the one true Church, and he hoped that spirit might long continue. In England they had been a little backward in manifesting sympathy towards their Protestant brethren abroad; and it was the aim of

the late lamented founder of the Alliance to remove that state of things, and to create more unity of combined effort amongst Christians generally. They were under great obligations to their foreign brethren, especially for the critical labours of French and German divines.

The Rev. Dr. Aveling, Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, said that he spoke with all the memory of the holy fragrance of their last meeting at Belfast, and said he was sure that the cause of the Evangelical Alliance was never more prosperous than it was at the present time. It was with them as it was in the world of nature: the east wind kept back vegetation, but the flowers were there and ready to bloom as soon as the warm breath of the south came. And they knew it would be the same with them; they were sure summer would come to them,—the south wind would blow, and the results they desired would be so manifested that they would be amazed. They had held meetings at Berlin, Amsterdam, and elsewhere; and he hoped they would yet meet at Rome. On his first visit to Rome he had to smuggle in his Bible surreptitiously, and now he could preach in the pulpit there. It might be that in time they could meet on the banks of the Hooghly. In conclusion, he would say that they (the Congregationalists) owned no human master, and that was one of the glories of the Evangelical Alliance; but they were glad to recognize the true Headship of Christ upon earth. One was their Master, even Christ; and it was because of that glorious truth it could be added, "all ye are brethren."

The Earl of Chichester welcomed in the name of the Alliance all the foreign ministers and other visitors present.

The Rev. A. F. Buscarlet (of Lausanne) said he was deputed by that new branch of the Evangelical Alliance in Switzerland to convey to this meeting their fraternal and affectionate greetings. Referring to the practical value of the Alliance both in Switzerland and in France, he said several of the national churches had been opened for united revival meetings when requested in the name of the Evangelical Alliance; for instance, at Lausanne, Yverdon, Vevey; and in France, at Lyons. Opportunities had thus been afforded of exhibiting true views of the spiritual union of believers—a thing much needed at the present time.

Professor Humbert (of Neuchâtel) expressed the honour he felt in being able to present to the members of the Evangelical Alliance assembled the salutations of their friends at Neuchâtel, and explained the beneficial results of a meeting which had been held there under its auspices, and at which members of all denominations of Christians were present. In his estimation, the Evangelical Alliance was the only one upon earth which could marshal Christians of different denominations to struggle against the disorder, luxury, and vice rampant in society.

Pastor Sandberger (from Wurtemberg) expressed the deep interest felt in Germany, and especially in Wurtemberg, in the Evangelical Alliance. Such an organization was necessary to oppose the union and discipline of our enemies; and he observed that it was increasingly important that Christians should show a united front in the battle-field under the one banner of the Lord Jesus Christ.

M. de Pressensé, late Member of the National Assembly in France, expressed his own personal sympathy and that of numerous friends in France for the object of the Evangelical Alliance, and the pleasure he had in being present in so distinguished an assembly as he saw around him. The French Protestant Churches regard the members of the Episcopal and other Churches in this country as brethren greatly beloved. Christian union was now more necessary than ever. More especially was it needful for Evangelical Christians to unite in affirming the truth and power of spiritual Christianity in face of that tide of unbelief setting in upon the nations. The Evangelical Alliance was valuable also as showing the world a true catholicity in face of the assumptions of Rome for an external and false catholicity. Allusion was made to the aid rendered by the Alliance to the cause of religious liberty, and the progress which had already been realized. Italy, with its capital, was now free to the Gospel; and in Spain, where the greatest efforts had been made to return to the darkness and oppression of former times, resistance had been successful to a certain degree. Alluding to France, the speaker said there had been tolerance, but not real religious liberty. He had lifted up his voice in the Assembly for perfect freedom, and he hoped yet to see the day when it would be the law of the land. He concluded an eloquent speech by offering a caution to Protestants against the dangers of intolerance on their part, and exhorted them to rally more and more around the Cross, as the great symbol and centre of Christian unity.

The Rev. H. P. Chase (from Canada), a clergyman of the Church of England, said

that in the year 1812 his grandfather had received from the British authorities, in the reign of George III., the medal which he now wears, and had directed that he should be a warrior, a medicine-man, and a great hunter; but Christianity had arrested his training in that direction, and now he stood as one who had dropped all the notions of his ancestors, and entered on what he considered the more useful life of a Christian missionary. He had, by the blessing of God, been able to bring over his own tribe to the Church of Christ, having received 260 communicants into the Church, and has now three congregations among the Ojibeways, the Delawares, and the Mohawks.

Pastor Lindblom (from Stockholm) said he was pleased to be there to express, in the name of the Churches of Sweden, their deep gratitude for what the Alliance had done in Sweden. In their country they were a little hampered by the laws. There was a law forbidding any one to preach the Gospel who was not a clergyman; and a few days before he left Stockholm he had met with one of the brethren who had been so forbidden by six church councils. But he was glad to say the law was unpopular, and when any one was imprisoned under it, it led to an outburst of holy indignation. There was also another law very much in their way—that which required that previous to marriage every man or woman should have been confirmed and have partaken of the Holy Communion. That law was also inoperative, and was daily becoming more so. In Parliament, an attempt had been made to allow the marriages of unconfirmed persons to be sanctioned, but hitherto without success. In other respects the Nonconformist Churches in Sweden were much encouraged. A great change had been effected in the country since the visit in 1858 of the Revs. Dr. Steane and Howard Hinton. He (the speaker) was then a boy, and he never forgot the influence of that visit. This last winter they had more progress than in all the previous years. A larger number of Christians had met under the sanction of the Swedish Branch of the Alliance, consisting of Lutherans, Methodists, Moravians, and Baptists; Sunday-school teachers of different denominations had also met together for prayer and social conference, and there had been many conversions.

In the course of the meeting the Rev James Davis announced that the next autumnal meeting of the Alliance would be held at Southport; and called attention to the Congress to be held in Geneva, in September next, on the subject of the observance of the Lord's-day and its extension throughout Europe. The movement had been initiated at the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance held in Geneva some years since.

On the motion of the Rev. James Davis, a vote of thanks was passed to the Earl of Chichester for his kindness in presiding.

In reply, the Earl expressed his attachment to the society, and his increasing sense of the necessity of union and co-operation amongst true Christians of every land.

The Rev. Daniel Bliss, D.D., of Beyrout, having pronounced the benediction, the meeting separated.

This social meeting of the members of the Alliance and other friends of Christian union was the largest and most influential that has been held for many years. It is hoped that it will encourage many to aid in promoting the object which the society has in view—viz., the manifested union and active co-operation of Evangelical Christians of different nations and various sections of the Universal Church.

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